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SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA.

By BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

IV.

THE readers of the *Spiritual Magazine* were made aware some few months ago of an entirely new and very remarkable development of spirit power through the mediumship of Mrs. French, which was then exciting great attention in New York. It was stated on the authority of Dr. Gray, Dr. Hallock, and several other well-known and intelligent Spiritualists that elaborate pencil drawings had been done in their presence by the spirits in the inconceivably short space of a *few seconds*. Before leaving for America my friends requested especially that I should try to see and report upon this new phenomenon; I accordingly took the earliest opportunity after my arrival in New York of making the acquaintance of Mrs. French; she resides together with her daughter at the house of Mr. J. Culbertson, No. 8, 4th Avenue, who is a serious, respectable, and very intelligent man—one upon whose word without enquiry I should be disposed at once to rely. Mr. Culbertson took some trouble to explain to me Mrs. French's history, and more particularly the incidents attendant on this new development OF INSTANTANEOUS SPIRIT DRAWING PRODUCED WITHOUT THE AID OF HUMAN AGENCY. Mrs. French it appears has from her childhood had peculiar gifts, and several extraordinary stories are told of her power of second sight at a very early age, and since the first advent of the "Modern Spiritual Manifestations" she has been prominent as a trance-speaking medium and medical clairvoyant, and she now practises as a "physician," which title with her name is inscribed on her door-plate. The new development is entirely apart from her professional avocations, and is only exhibited occasionally, being without her control, inasmuch as the spirits entrance her first, and then make *their* own arrangements for a *séance*. The circumstances immediately preceding and attendant on this new and most extraordi-

nary phase of Mrs. French's mediumship were thus described to me by Mr. Culbertson.

On the 15th of February, 1860, Mrs. French left her house at two p.m., and returned at five. It had been snowing furiously all the day, and the side walks and streets were almost impassable from the melted snow and deep mud. She said she had been to visit Mrs. Melins, a lady friend of hers residing at Brooklyn, which, as my readers no doubt know, is a town lying on the opposite bank of the river to New York. Whilst there she said she had been entranced, and the spirits had made to Mrs. Melins some indefinite prediction of coming events, which they said, if realized, would be the greatest possible proof of spirit-power. Mrs. French spoke of other communications which had transpired at Mrs. Melins', and added that she did not leave her house until 35 minutes past four, that she had no recollection how she got to Brooklyn nor back again, nor of anything on the way until she found herself in the street cars opposite her own door. Mr. Culbertson and her family listened to her statement in doubt and astonishment, and concluded that there must be some delusion, that she had concealed herself in a trance, and had never left the house, since there was no appearance whatever in her dress to indicate that she had been in the streets. *She had on thin shoes, they were not in the least soiled, and her stockings were not even damp*, and the time occupied in coming from Brooklyn, according to her statement, was at least half an hour less than the journey could be done in under ordinary circumstances.

Whilst they were cross-questioning her she became entranced, and a spirit speaking through her said—"You need not doubt her, all she has said is true; Mrs. Melins will confirm it. Mrs. French *did not* ride from the ferry at Brooklyn to Mrs. Melins' house, nor back again to the boat, nor did she ride on this side to or from the cars, and she *did* come home in the time she has stated." Mr. Culbertson and Mrs. French's daughters were very much puzzled and surprised at this statement, and asked—"How is it if she did not ride that her shoes and feet are not wet, and her dress unsoiled? She could not possibly step even across the side walk without wetting her feet in the present slushy state of the streets." The spirit answered—"She was in our hands—sustained by our influence; she could not, as you say, have walked, and did not, she was carried along with a rapid gliding motion seemingly walking, but not actually so, and never stepping into the mud." Mr. Culbertson was disinclined to receive this explanation, but looking at all the facts it was inevitably so, since it was quite impossible that she could have passed to Brooklyn and back under ordinary circumstances. He then asked if they had carried her across the river, they said "No, the electrical

emanations of the earth and water differ, besides there was no necessity for incurring unnecessary risks nor for attracting attention which we especially wished to avoid, very few persons saw her, as very few were out in such a day in the streets at Brooklyn." In the evening of the same day Mrs. French went out to pay a professional visit, and though she had gone fully prepared with thick boots, she returned home with wet feet, and all the appearance of having had to tramp as other people through the thick mud of the streets.

On the following day she went out again in a mysterious way ; was absent four hours, and could give no account of herself, but she brought home with her some drawing paper, pencils, and rubber, though no one knew with what object. In the evening she sent for Mrs. Melins to come to her immediately, and though all this was very strange, her daughters humoured her, waiting to see what would come of it. On Mrs. Melins' arrival she fully corroborated Mrs. French's statements of her visit on the previous day—and they all, including several friends, accompanied her to the drawing-room, where, selecting a small table, she placed it in the centre of the room, and invited them to be seated. She then commenced, in a state of trance, to manipulate the drawing paper in a very elaborate way, using wine and acids as a preparation, and in *thirty minutes* the first of a series of spirit pencil drawings was produced, and thus the mysterious promise made to Mrs. Melins was realised. Several other drawings were done at the time in like manner, the subjects being suggested by one or other of the party, and the whole proceeding, though witnessed only by those accustomed to spiritual manifestations created the greatest interest and excitement.

Up to the period of my visit many *séances* had been held at intervals. The sittings were not of a public character, nor did Mrs. French make the exhibition a money question, all who came were invited ; and thus, even the most feeble of all objectors have no foot-hold in this case,—I mean that class of persons who ask to compensate professional mediums for loss of time, make sure at once that imposition lies at the bottom though their sagacity fails to discover it. Among these visitors, the one most constant in his attendance, as I found by his name being attached to the list of those who certified to the conditions, and one of producing the drawings, was Mr. J. Gurney, who is an artist of celebrity, and the leading photographer of New York ; and as this gentleman attended the two sittings I had with Mrs. French, and was in quiet conversation with her on the only other so casual visits I made to the house, I inferred, but have no other reason for saying so, that he made a practice of consulting the invisibles, and whilst others were smiling at his "silly

credulity," he was very possibly getting useful, and practical hints, and accumulating a fund of knowledge, which has already placed him, though but a young man, at the head of his profession. My stay in New York being limited, I begged Mr. Culbertson to arrange a sitting for me either on Friday or Saturday. Mrs. French, being consulted, said she was engaged professionally on Friday, and she had promised to take her family to the theatre on Saturday evening, it must, therefore, be one evening in the following week, and as she entirely deferred to the dictate of the spirits, she would be told by them, and would then send to inform me of the day. I continued my conversation with Mr. Culbertson, who was showing me a number of the earliest drawings, and explaining the circumstance under which they were obtained, when Mrs. French, entranced, again entered the room, and advancing to me, said, "My name is Jemmy—I have not the pleasure, sir, of knowing you, but you are very well known in the spirit world; and hearing you express a desire to see our drawings, I am sent to say we shall be glad to see you at eight o'clock on Saturday evening. We cannot promise much, but we will do the best we can—good day, sir;" and with a formal bow she retired. Mr. Culbertson said the engagement was binding on her, and would supersede the intended visit to the theatre, and as the result enables me to record one of the most wonderful facts developed in Spiritualism, and witnessed by myself, my readers will no doubt think the change of purpose an advantage.

On the evening fixed I went, accompanied by Judge Edmonds, who had not seen this new phase of spirit power, and our party numbered about twelve, including a lady, who was the mother of the spirit Jemmy, and he, I found, was the principal artist in the production of these spirit-drawings. As soon as we were assembled, Mrs. French became entranced, and with great formality invited each to take a particular seat, reserving the post of honour next to herself for me, where I could best see the exact mode in which the whole *séance* was conducted. A very small drawing-room table was placed in the centre of the circle, and not within three feet of any of us. A shawl was then tied round the lower part of the legs of the table to form a dark chamber. Under this was placed a thin board to make a firm surface, on which to spread the drawing paper, two saucers of water-colours and brushes, a bundle of coloured crayons, some drawing pencils, and a glass of water. A number of fresh sheets of drawing paper were then handed to the medium, which she gave us to examine, and then she cut them into exact squares. Rolling them up in the shape of a tube, she commenced breathing through them, exercising an effort which lasted five minutes, and

which appeared to exhaust her, this singular process she explained was to give the necessary moisture to the surface of the paper, and superseded the use of wine and acids as at first used by her for damping it. She then handed the roll to me requesting that I would place it under the covered part of the table, whilst she at the same time went on her knees, and placed her hands under the cover, spread the sheets out flat, and returned to her seat by my side. All these arrangements being made with the gas burning, she then requested the light to be lowered, which was done, though it was still light enough for us to see each other, and even the hands of our watches. Thus seated in perfect quiet, after a brief interval the medium cried "time;" when presently we heard a rapid scraping and scrubbing on the card board, as if many hands were at work with the quickness of steam power, and "time" being again called, the pencils were heard to drop suddenly and simultancously from the hands as it were of the invisible artists.

The same process and arrangements being repeated, four elaborate and beautifully executed pictures of birds and flowers were produced in succession, the first being a pencil drawing, and the others in colours; and the time occupied was, respectively, eight, eleven, twelve, and fifteen *seconds*. I am aware how difficult it is to realise such a statement, that finished drawings should be executed in such a way and in such an inconceivably short space of time; but all that I can say, is—that I have faithfully recorded the facts. There was, I can assure the reader, an absence of everything like conjuring arrangements. Mrs. French never left our sight. I saw the white surface of the cardboard immediately before the operations commenced, and the most striking and convincing fact, to those present, of the work having been done on the instant, was *that the coloured drawings were wet when taken up, and that they took some minutes to dry after they were in our hands*, and at the close of the sitting I removed, at Mrs. French's request, the shawl which was tied round the legs of the table. No one present suspected imposture, and indeed, under the circumstances, it would have been foolish and unjust to do so. The scene and results are not imaginary, as some wise people might suggest, for I have the four drawings in my possession, endorsed with the names of several gentlemen who were present, including Judge Edmonds and Mr. J. Gurney, the artist. When the fourth drawing was completed, the medium, addressing me, and still speaking in the trance state, said—"That is all we purpose doing this evening. I am sorry, sir, we could not manage to put a Bible chapter into one of them, as you wished; we meant to place it in the centre of the wreath; we will however do it for you another day."

I then asked—How many spirits were engaged in the work this evening?

A.—There were eleven of us to-night; we go on adding one or two to our numbers whenever we can find suitable ones to aid us.

Q.—You appear to have less ceremony in preparing for the drawings now than you had at first?

A.—Yes, that is because we did not know at first what we could do or what conditions were absolutely required, so we had to go on trying our own powers as well as the force of the medium.

Q.—Don't you think you could produce these drawings without the aid of any of our materials, except the cardboard?

A.—No, sir; we don't expect to do that, we never heard of such a thing as that being done.

Q.—Yes; there is a medium in France, who receives communications in writing in various colours, without any pen or ink being at hand. You will, perhaps, consult your friends and tell them this, and see whether, as you go on, you cannot produce the drawings without paints or pencils, which might be called spiritual photography.

A.—Well, sir, I will tell them what you say, but I don't think we shall ever do that. Good night!

I was preparing to take my departure from New York, and had given up all expectation of seeing anything more of this remarkable phase of spiritual manifestations, when I received, two days before leaving, the following note—

“Dear sir,—Our spirit friends have appointed a drawing circle for this evening. Mrs. French says it is principally on your account. I hope, therefore, it will be convenient for you to come.

“Very respectfully yours,

“THOS. CULBERTSON.”

I at once put aside all other engagements, glad to avail myself of a second opportunity of testing the reality and integrity of these marvellous productions with the advantage of previous observation and reflection on all the conditions and circumstances of the first sitting. Dr. Hallock, Mr. Gurney and Professor Lyman were of the party. The arrangements were made much as I have before described them, except that there was even less formality and preparation than before, and the medium instead of breathing through the roll of paper, tied a damp towel round it, to give to the sheets the necessary moisture. I was, as on the former occasion, invited to take my seat by the side of the medium at the best point for seeing the entire operations. The small table stood in the centre of a large circle, comprised of about an equal number of both sexes. When “time” was called there was the same rubbing and scrubbing helter-skelter sort of haste to do something in the shortest time possible, and

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"time" was again called we heard as before the pencils drop gently from the hands of the invisibles. Six drawings were made on this occasion in rapid succession, each occupying a few seconds. The first one was presented to me, and I was gratified to find that the spirits had not forgotten their message. They had drawn a beautifully executed bouquet with a card rising from the centre holding an open Bible, with a part of the 14th chapter of John, 200 words most minutely but clearly written in pencil, and the time occupied in its production as little as I have described it was just *eleven seconds*.*

On the first day of our acquaintance, Judge Edmonds did me the honour of introducing me to his friend, Professor James J. Mapes, who, as a chemist, holds a leading position in the scientific world both in America and Europe. He is a man of varied talents, possessing a brilliant intellect, and extraordinary conversational powers. He has mastered, after most careful study and examination, the philosophy of Spiritualism, and is ready to help, were he to publicly identify himself with the subject, more than any other man, to inculcate and spread its principles and doctrines.

Professor Mapes' history in connexion with Spiritualism is an instructive lesson, and answers in itself two of the prominent questions which have been put by its opponents in this country; namely—If Spiritualism be worth consideration, is it that no man eminent in science has ventured to investigate its claims and expound its philosophy? And, admitting the reality of the phenomena—*Cui bono?* Well, the answer is Professor Mapes, of New York, like his compeer, the late Dr. Hare, of Philadelphia, a man of science, undertook the investigation several years ago, with an entire disbelief in its reality, and a determination to expose "the delusion;" and, like Dr. Hare, he was driven step by step from his original position, gradually converted to a full belief in spirit intercourse, and as a consequence, to a belief in a life hereafter, which he had previously denied. Can men, in the face of such facts consistently ask what is the good of it; and asserting that if it is true, it must be all of the devil?

The Professor is largely engaged in agriculture, and has a farm at Newark, New York, where his family reside; whilst his professional pursuits oblige him to remain a great portion of the year in New York. He was (as he told me), a materialist, up to the age of 45, and in the early start of the modern manifestation—thirteen years ago, he set to work earnestly to

A very wonderful character of these drawings induces us to publish them, *fac-simile*, which illustrate the present number of the *Spiritual Magazine*.—ED.

investigate Spiritualism, without saying a word on the subject to his family. Shortly after, he discovered that one of his daughters was also engaged in a somewhat similar way. She had in fact become a writing medium, without knowing it. On one of his usual weekly visits to his family, this daughter said, "Father, I want to shew you something very curious. Don't laugh at me, here are pages that from time to time I have been influenced to write, without my will or my mind being engaged in the work. It has been going on for weeks, and I should not have named it now, but that I saw in the *Tribune* newspaper yesterday, that others had been similarly influenced; and it is said to be the work of spirits. I want to know the meaning of it." Curious to obtain evidence from such a source, though anxious to avoid explanation and encouragement, the Professor asked her to take a pen and let him see what she meant. Her hand was moved excitedly, and she at once rapidly dashed off a long message purporting to be from the spirit of his father. The Professor said, "If there is any meaning in this I should like, if possible, to have some proof of identity." Miss Mapes' hand again wrote "You may recollect that I gave you, among other books an Encyclopædia; look at page 120 of that book and you will find my name written there, which you have never seen." The book alluded to was with others in a box at the warehouse in town. On his arrival in town, Professor Mapes opened the case which had been fastened up for 27 years, and there, to his great astonishment, he found as described his father's name written on the identical page 120.

This incident awakened a new interest in him, and he accordingly determined to conduct a serious investigation, and at once secured the services of Mrs. Brown, the eldest daughter in the Fox family—a well-known and very reliable medium of great power. His next step was to obtain a party of friends to join him, which was, however, a very difficult task. He first invited his son-in-law, Mr. Dodge, a Member of the Senate, who laughed at the request, said it was too absurd, and hoped the Professor was not going to sacrifice his time and his fame to such a delusion. And in this way he was met by others until at length making it a personal favour and to oblige him, he got a party of ten together; having, as he said, purposely selected one half of *positive* minds who would believe in nothing, and the other half of *negative* minds who might be induced to believe in anything. They agreed to meet every Monday evening for twenty sittings, and up to the nineteenth evening they had not elicited anything sufficiently satisfactory to carry conviction, or to be worth recording; but on the twentieth evening some very curious and striking phenomena were displayed. The spirits

who purported to be present gave peculiar names, such as Pierre Wilding, Deliverance, &c., insisting, against the belief of those present, that they were their ancestors, and indicating in the most definite manner their relationship. Upon subsequent enquiry, each of these statements was verified, and a previously hidden page of family history being thus unexpectedly revealed, it excited a natural interest in the minds of all to continue their sittings, which Professor Mapes assured me were prolonged uninterruptedly for FIVE YEARS, during which every conceivable test was applied, *resulting at length in the entire conversion of the whole party.*

At that period, Spiritualism was spreading in America in all directions. Mediums were developed in numerous families, and daily the press announced, on the testimony of more or less reliable witnesses, the most marvellous accounts of new manifestations of spirit power. Professor Mapes having become satisfied that a great truth lay at the root of it, though mixed up, as he thought, with fanaticism and some charlatanism, determined to see everything for himself; and wherever he heard of new wonders, he packed up his portmanteau, and without regard to time or expense, started off to make a personal investigation. In this way he visited, among many others, the Davenport Boys at Buffalo, and the spirit-room of Jonathan Koons, situated in the mountains of Ohio; and he fully corroborated the extraordinary statements made respecting them.

To those who are not acquainted with the history of American Spiritualism, it may be acceptable for me here to introduce some account of these remarkable manifestations. I take the following from a letter written by a reliable witness, Mr. Charles Partridge, whose acquaintance I made in New York. He says:—

“ I attended three public circles (open without charge to all comers) in the spirit-house of Mr. Koons—a house or room a little distance from his residence, built expressly for the purpose. The presiding spirit is an Indian named John King. The room will seat about 30 persons, and it is usually filled. After the circle is formed the door and windows are shut, and the light extinguished. Instantaneously a tremendous blow was struck upon the table by a large drumstick, and immediately the bass and tenor drums were beaten rapidly, like the roll-call on the muster field, making through the hills a thousand echoes. This continued for five minutes or more; and, when ended, King saluted us through the trumpet, and in an audible voice said, ‘ Good evening, friends; what particular manifestations do you desire ?’ King then requested Mr. Koons to play on the violin; the whole spirit band playing at the same time on the drums, triangle, tamborine, harp, accordion, &c. Upon these instruments

the spirits perform scientifically, in very perfect tune. They commence at one instant in full blast, and stop suddenly after sounding the full note. After playing an introductory piece on the instruments they sing. The spirits *spoke to us*, requesting us to remain silent. Presently we heard, as it seemed, human voices singing in the distance, in so low a tone as to be scarcely distinguishable; the sounds gradually increased, each part relatively, until it appeared as if a full choir of human voices were in our small room singing most exquisitely. I think I never heard such perfect harmony—so captivating was it, that the heart-strings seemed to relax or to increase their tension to accord with such heavenly sounds. It seemed to me that no person could sit in that sanctuary without feeling the song of 'Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to all men,' spontaneously rising in the bosom and finding expression on the lip.

"After this vocal performance, in which, however, no words were articulated, several pieces were separately performed on the instruments by the spirits. Spirit hands and arms were seen; and that we might see them distinctly, they wet their hands with a weak solution of phosphorus, prepared at their request for the purpose by Mr. Koons. At one of these circles there were three hands, which had been covered with this solution, apparent to all of us at the same time. They passed swiftly round the room over our head, carrying the instruments, and playing upon them, keeping perfect time. The phosphorescent illumination from those hands was so strong that it occurred to me I could see to read by it. I took a pamphlet from my pocket, and asked the spirit to place its hand over it, that I might see to read. The spirit did so, and I immediately perceived that I held the book wrong end up. I turned it and could read. The members of the circle said they could, at the same time, see my face and the pamphlet in my hand. These spirit hands were, at our request, placed in our own; I looked at them, and felt them, until I was entirely satisfied. They appeared to be reorganised from the same elements that ours are. One spirit hand took a pen, and we all saw it write on the paper lying on the table; the writing was executed much more rapidly than I ever saw mortal hand perform; the paper was then handed to me by the spirit, and I still retain it in my possession.

"At the close of the *séance* the spirit of King, as is his custom, took up the trumpet, and gave a short lecture through it—*speaking audibly and distinctly*, presenting the benefits to be derived both in time and eternity from intercourse with spirits, and exhorting us to be discreet and bold in speech, diligent in our investigations, faithful to the responsibilities which those

privileges impose, charitable towards those who are in ignorance or error, tempering our zeal with wisdom," &c., &c.

Professor Mapes described to me the exhibition witnessed by him through the Davenport Boys. These boys permit themselves to be bound by cords, hand and foot, in any way the operator pleases, and in an instant they are liberated by the spirits. The spirit of John King is also chief actor of their band. With this spirit Professor Mapes said *he conversed for half an hour*. The voice was loud and distinct, spoken through a trumpet. He shook hands with him, the spirit giving a most powerful grasp; then taking his hand again, it was increased in size *and covered with hair*. The Professor said he went, accompanied only by his friends, among whom were Dr. Warren and Dr. Wilson. They had a jocular sort of evening, into which King entered heartily, and at length played them a trick, for which they were not prepared, and which rather astonished them. Their hats and caps were suddenly whisked from their heads, and replaced in an instant. Turning on the lights, they found each hat and cap was turned inside out, and it took many minutes to replace them. Dr. Warren's gloves, which were in his hat, were also turned completely inside out. This exhibition took place in a large club room at Buffalo, selected by the Professor and his party, having but one place of entrance and exit. The boys sat on an elevated platform at a large table; and this table, in an instant of time, was carried over the heads of the auditors, and deposited at the most distant part of this large room.

Whilst Professor Mapes continued his own investigation, he felt it necessary from its all-engrossing character to restrain his daughter from pursuing her mediumship, fearing that her health, which was delicate, would suffer, though he said some of her writing was brilliant and powerful, and much beyond her natural capacity. An arrangement was accordingly made for her to visit me friends with a view of weaning her from the fascination which occupied her whole time, and they were secretly enjoined not to leave her much alone. Mrs. Mapes was at this period together opposed to the whole subject, and unacquainted with the fact that her husband was so deeply interested in it, said to me one day, "I am very much distressed to think our daughter's phylly should practise deceit upon us, I have written a strong proof to her as I feel sure it is most improper conduct." Professor Mapes dissuaded his wife from sending the letter, telling her he had his own motives for wishing her to delay doing so. In a short time after Mrs. Mapes herself was impelled the day to write, and became at once developed as a writing medium. Fascinated with this new power, she continued day by day exclusively occupied with her writing, neglecting everything

else, until at length Professor Mapes felt it necessary to interfere, and said—"Wife, you and I have been married 30 years, and I have never before interfered with your personal liberty, but now I have seriously to request that you will not at least for the present give any more time to these influences, and that you will consent to destroy all you have written." With many protests Mrs. Mapes at length consented, and tearing the leaves from a large manuscript volume, she consigned them page by page to the flames—the understanding being that she would not put her hand to paper for 12 months to come.

Months having passed, and the tendency to yield to the influence having been effectually repressed, her husband and family were surprised one day by her making preparations for drawing, and declaring that she believed she could copy plants and flowers. They smiled at this announcement and were incredulous, as she had never been instructed, and had never shown the least talent for the art. She went, however, into the garden, plucked an apple blossom, and sat down to copy it. In a few minutes she made, greatly to the surprise of all around her, a most excellent copy of this very delicate flower, and thus spiritually influenced, she commenced a series of coloured drawings, which as they proceeded increased in beauty, and have now become most perfect specimens of the art.

On referring to the date of their compact, Professor Mapes found the drawing had commenced exactly twelve months to the day on which Mrs. Mapes had promised him not to write any more. The Professor has not attempted to interfere with this development; on the contrary, he appears to encourage it, and is highly interested in her progress; and as a portion of each day is devoted to drawing and painting, and as they do not part with many, a large accumulation has taken place, comprising now a great number of very interesting volumes. These drawings, which are produced with great rapidity, unlike most mediumistic productions, are of natural fruits, flowers, and birds, and this extraordinary fact attaches to the birds, that each bird, without study or any knowledge of the natural history of the subject, on the part of Mrs. Mapes, is placed in the accustomed associations of tree or plant on which it builds or feeds.

I am indebted to Mrs. Mapes for two specimens of her work, which she kindly presented to me, and which have created the greatest admiration in all to whom I have shown them; one is an iris, and the other a collection of American autumnal leaves. They are both pronounced by connoisseurs to be works of high art, and the marvellous fact remains to be told, that *both paintings were commenced and finished in little more than one hour.* No artist, I believe, could copy them in less than two days.

Miss Sophia Mapes, after a brief period of repose, resumed her writing mediumship, and during my visit I had an opportunity of seeing it exercised. In the absence of the other members of the family, I sat at a table with her and Mrs. Mapes, when her hand was moved with the usual nervous excitability which accompanies writing mediumship, and in the most rapid manner, at a rate indeed in which it would be thought almost physically impossible to wield a pencil, the following communication, which I have in my possession, purporting to be stated by the spirit of Wm. Humboldt, brother of the well-known traveller was given, with the erasure of two words only:—

“The truths of spirit intercourse having become plain to the later portion of intelligent observers of the manifestations, it is of the utmost importance that there should be the most careful labour to comprehend the relation which the newly acquired knowledge bears to our former ideas of God and truth. We are in the spirit world, and on the earth, in the relation to God and to each other which constantly provokes enquiry. We are co-working. The human spirit is a power in the universe of material creation, and it awakens by its intelligence to know of the laws of nature; and you may be assured that the natural man becomes cognisant of no law in which it is not itself a power. We are *en rapport* with all the visible universe. When spirit is not in active association with matter, it ignores all connexion with its changes and progression. The old idea long ago conceived as the *logos* is a reality. But as the idea among the Church fathers was supposed to be culminated in Christ Jesus, so is now the spirit of man actively active on the world of matter to develop the latent forces in the atomic relation of the particles, and the peculiarities of combination. Man controls the laws of which he is cognisant, and neither knows nor dreams of laws in which he is not a creative and sustaining power. We acknowledge the action of mind on matter, and of the relation of the human forces to the laws of the material universe. Man must cease to receive himself that he is apart from creation, viewing it as he were a sculptured obelisk, or made of the rock itself, but a part of the ever-changing material universe. In truth he is himself, and is force, when he little recognises his prowess and influence. We know that the natural developments of life through the ages have contributed to the status of this age, and when the present life exists in more complete form, in more extended power, and more intense action, the truth is all the more manifest, God is all-apparent in man, and spirit, as a power, and could you once conceive of nature and spirit as a unity, you would then conceive of God as a Spirit. Now,

you only know him as love, or as intensity and vigour in your own spirit, and in the law you may realise. Never forget that to see God, to realise God, you should be God. He is not so distant from your being that you may conceive of him as a personality, and therefore, it is impossible for the human mind to realise His existence but in its own extent of power and control. We, as spirit, know better than when we inhabited the earthly form, the extent and all-pervading power and nature of individual spirit. And as the communication of force, and of heat, knows no channel, neither does the spirit know by what means it becomes a power in causes which apparently have no connection with our own intention, or conscious will power.

“WILLIAM HUMBOLDT.”

The labour bestowed by Professor Mapes in the investigation of Spiritualism, and the knowledge thereby acquired by him, it is to be hoped will yet be turned to useful public purposes. He had an intention of visiting England shortly. The present political troubles in the States, however, would no doubt delay the period of his visit. When he does come, we must endeavour to prevail on him to deliver a course of lectures on the subject, to which he is not indisposed. If he consents to do so, I venture to say that the foremost student of the spiritual philosophy in this country will have many new pages opened to him for his further advancement. For my part, I am bound to say that I never heard a man express himself more eloquently on any subject. During the last conversation I had with him, Professor Mapes summed up his argument for Spiritualism thus—“If after making every allowance for the incongruities, false theories, fanaticism and the common errors attached to Spiritualism only ten per cent. of the whole should prove pure and impregnable, it is still as sound a science as Chemistry was at the beginning of this century, which has thrown aside ninety per cent. of the teachings then received as truths.”

The Christianity of the present age is *dead*, compared with what it should be. When I lived out west, our wells were all dug very shallow, and when a drought came, the water failed. Then we sent a man down into the well to dig another within it, and by and by he came to water far below the first well. But if the rain was long withheld, this well also failed. Then the man was sent a third time to dig and dig, until at length he struck the living springs, which flow perpetually, which no drought can affect. Many people think that after conversion religion will take care of itself. That water once gained, there will always be a sufficient supply. There are whole Churches whose religion is but a few feet deep. As long as showers are abundant, this may do; but when they do not fall, often the wells are dry. Let this not be so with you. Sink the shaft deeper and deeper still, until within you bubbles up that living water which runneth from beneath the throne of God. Don't depend on *showers* of grace. Be not at all content until the river is within your own souls.—Rev. H. W. BEECHER.—*Life Thoughts*.

THOMAS TOKE LYNCH.*

WE read in the Gospels of a woman who had suffered many ings of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and as nothing bettered, but rather grew worse. This poor woman's perience of the doctors is that of many of us with the preachers. It she, though she tried many and was nothing bettered, did t lose hope, and her hope was justified in her cure by the Good ysician. So we, though we may have suffered much from ny preachers, do not despair; and our trust is justified now and in, in meeting Him "who spake as never man spake," in the iration of some of His chosen ones.

Have you ever heard Mr. Lynch? If not, then do by all ns. You will see a man in feeble health, and worn with ; suffering; one who has often looked down into his grave up into the heavens; and not in any way a pulpit Apollo, , with blanched hands and white handkerchief and honied s, delivers platitudes as eloquence. An invalid's life too t begets invalid thought, querulous and sickly. It has not so with Mr. Lynch; his illnesses must have affected his , but not to weaken it; thoughts more vigorous, healthy, worklike than his, you will find uttered nowhere. Perhaps e pain and stillness of the sick room they owe a tenderness, cate nervousness of strength, which add grace to their manly

A sermon of Lynch's it is difficult to describe. It is no essay, with a preface, disquisition and peroration measured e time the audience expect to get off to dinner; it seems an improvisation, or an hour's talk about a text, with ations drawn from every region of experience and daily Do not suppose, however, that Lynch is a rambling preacher; all; now and then his sermons look so, but when you are o his style you will find they have all a firm back-bone or n of method, though hidden, as it ought to be, in living

If you are a careless or stupid listener, you may think him ; but then it is your bluntness and not his acuteness that ult. Indeed, we may say, that few like their first sermon ch's, and that not until they have heard a third, fourth, or , some begin to appreciate the preacher's genius; but first ies overcome, enjoyment commences, and as long as Lynch s, no man of sense need complain of a dull Sunday morning lon.

ou read much, you will usually be able to tell on what

pastures an ordinary preacher has been browsing ; but not so with Lynch. In him you encounter a thoroughly original mind. He looks at things in new but natural ways—in ways you wonder you never saw them in before ; men, thoughts, and facts he handles after quite novel methods, but without eccentricity or desire of display ; from cant he is innocent as a child—innocent to a degree we never yet knew preacher. The wealth of his mind seems inexhaustible. We have listened to him now whenever we have had opportunity for some years, and have never found him repeat himself. He has given us a new sense of the fertility and riches possible to the mind. Theoretically, we were ready to admit that, if man would open his heart to the Divine Spirit, harvests of wisdom beyond imagination would be the answer to his faith. In Lynch we have seen something of this realised. In fairy lore we read of a princess, from whose lips dropped diamonds and pearls for each word she spoke. Those who first saw the princess, fancied that drops so precious could not go on for long. So with Lynch ; you think his wealth of thought is wonderful, but of course a few sermons more will exhaust it ; and yet it does not end so, but still flows on and on. The fount from which his wisdom is derived is not the exhaustible reservoir of his own conceit, but is to be sought in the infinite spiritual springs.

Mr. Lynch's ministry has suffered many interruptions and some changes of place through his varying states of health. He now preaches in a small hall in Gower-street, opposite the London University, on Sunday mornings, at eleven o'clock. The volume before us contains fourteen sermons, preached there during the last months of 1860 ; and they will give a reader some idea of the preacher's affluence, minus the power of his presence. When one sees the small audience to which Mr. Lynch is accustomed to discourse, it is enough to make one blush for the times. He is unknown to the Church, and amongst the Dissenters, where his lot has been cast, he is maligned as dangerous and heretical, with that spite and pertinacity of which sanctimony is the only master. His little flock is about to erect for him an iron chapel on a plot of ground near Mornington Crescent, in the Hampstead-road, which we hope may bring him into wider notice and more generous fame. Suspected and disowned by his brethren, Lynch's case is but the repetition of the old, old story : Christ is evermore crucified in his generation ; we kill the prophets, and our children garnish their sepulchres.

A LETTER FROM WILLIAM HOWITT.

A DISCUSSION on the genuineness and evidences of Spiritual Manifestations is now going on in the *British Controversialist*. The August number contains an article by Mr. T. P. Barkas, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, in which he introduces the following letter on the subject addressed to him by Mr. William Howitt, which we have great pleasure in introducing to our readers, as we know that they will have great pleasure in reading it :—

Highgate, July 2nd, 1861.

MY DEAR MR. BARKAS,—I assure you that it would give me the greatest pleasure to take up a spiritual rifle and range myself alongside of you brave volunteers in the *Controversialist*, but it is at present now impossible. I have some extraordinary engagements to complete within two months, which will take more time than prudence would allot to intellectual labour, if prudence could have a voice in the matter. If you look at the *Spiritual Magazine*, you will see that I have done very little there for some time : it is for the same cause.

Have you heard the last exploit of Faraday? He had engaged, I hear, to attend a *séance* at Mr. Home's, on the 24th, where he was to meet a small but distinguished party. The engagement was of some standing, but on the very day on which the *séance* was to be held, he wrote to say that he could not come because he had beforehand a PROGRAMME of the proceedings!!

This is, perhaps, the most exquisite piece of moral cowardice, or of a more astounding ignorance of what has so long been going on all around him in this and many other countries, that ever was heard of. Imagine some ancient rabbi sending to one of the prophets for a programme of his next manifestations; or some sophist of Athens sending to Delphi for a programme of the priestess's next vaticination! The repeated assertions of Home, and of every medium, hundreds of them in number, including those of America, and many of them people of as high character, and some of them of equal scientific attainments, Faraday, that these manifestations do not depend on them, or on any supernatural agency, being so totally lost on this man of science, with his cal tests and galvanic batteries, that he treats Home as a conjuror, who can pre-arrange his tricks.

It is not cowardice, that of Bob Acres was audacity to it; if it is ignorance, what crass ignorance, what Egyptian darkness in a modern manian preacher! "Art thou a master in Israel and knowest these things?" . . . Oh! leave him alone amid his pots and

pans, his crucibles and electrical jars, for he will never get beyond them. People fondly imagine that *science* is to unravel this mystery. Yes; but not physical science. Physical science must deal with mere physics; it is but knowledge in the caterpillar state. It is physical science, knowledge with its spiritual eyes open, endowed with its spiritual wings, that must learn and teach it. Science not like a broken weapon, of which only the wooden handle is left; but science complete, compact, unfractured, while the spiritual blade is yet in the handle, keen to pierce through bone and marrow to the spiritual substance. It is not Balaam summoned by the pagan Balak, going up to curse the Israel of truth, that will do it, but Balaam inspired by the God of truth, and made to see the camp of the blessed spread broadly before him in its serene greatness, and to bless and not curse. Those who will learn Spiritualism must have "the vision and the faculty divine" given them, as Balaam had; no probes, nor lancets, nor stethoscopes, no machinery of jars, and batteries, and chemical tests, will ever touch the spiritual. As well may a fish attempt to breathe with the eagle the air of the mountain top. "Balaam the son of Beor hath said, and *the man whose eyes are open* hath said: he hath said, which hath the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, *falling into a trance*, but having his eyes open." Till the Faradays are put into Balaam's condition, they are better in their own laboratories; they are useful there, and utterly useless anywhere else.

When Christ came to display His miracles, He did not ask for scientific men to come and explain them. He knew better. He knew that there is a place for everything, and that everything must be in its place. He thanked God that He had hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes and sucklings. He chose men of plain sense and healthy observation, enslaved to no theories, blinded by no prejudices, to witness and record a series of plain though astonishing facts. And his great gospel to us Gentiles added his testimony that "not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," were amongst those who could see and admit these matters of fact. And it never will be otherwise to the end of time. The pioneers of knowledge, those who will go before the multitude and clear the way of truth, will not be the heavy dragoons of physical science, with all their *impedimenta*, their baggage waggons crammed with ponderous theories; nor the still more heavy infantry, laden with unnecessary trousers and many rounds of ball cartridges. It does not need Æsop to tell us that the dunghill cock of mere physics will always turn over with a contemptuous beak, and spurn with its spurred heel, the diamond of spiritual truth. Lactantius, in his writings, is continually de-

nouncing Cicero as the great moral coward of his age, because, knowing that there was only one true God, he had not the courage to say so, but wrote a whole book "De Naturâ Deorum." After ages will point out the great moral cowards of this; amongst them, two of our scientific men in particular, like that celebrated king of Israel who made a long search after asses that he could not find, will stand the tallest of all by the whole head and shoulders.

I wish some of your negatives could have seen what I and Mrs. Howitt, and Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson saw at the house of a lady in Regent's Park, about three months ago, and the like of which some of our most distinguished nobility have seen there repeatedly of late. There were, besides us, Mr. and Mrs. Home, and a Russian Count Steinbock. We had beautiful music played on the accordion when held in one hand by Mr. Home, who cannot play a note, and the same when held by Mrs. Wilkinson. We had the clearest and most prompt communications on different subjects through the alphabet, and flowers were taken from a bouquet in a cheffonier at a distance, and brought and handed to each of us. Mrs. Howitt had a sprig of geranium handed to her by an invisible hand, which we have planted, and it is growing; so that no delusion, no fairy money turned into dross or leaves. I saw a spirit hand as distinctly as I ever saw my own. I touched it several times, once when it was handing me the flower. My silk dress was pulled so strongly that she thought it would come out the gathers, and was rustled so loudly, that it was not only heard by all of us, but might have been heard in another room. My wife's handkerchief was taken from her knee, and brought and whisked against my hand at the opposite side of the table; I thought, with the intention of my taking it, but the spirit would not allow that, but withdrew it a little, then whisked my dress with it anew, and then flung it into the middle of the room. My dress and the handkerchief were perfectly visible during these communications, but the motive power was invisible.

Then the spirits went to a shrine of bronze idols, belonging to the lady of the house, who bought them in India. Some of them are very heavy. They pitched them down on the floor, with such violence that the clash might have been heard all over the house. The larger of these idols,—perhaps all—of that I am not certain—unscrewed, and the screws work exactly the same way to our screws; but the spirits unscrewed them, and flung their heads lustily on the floor, saying, through the medium, "You must all do your best to destroy idolatry, both in India and in England, where it prevails in numerous ways. Idolatry of rank, idolatry of wealth, idolatry of self, idolatry of intellect and learning," &c., &c. The different parts were

thrown under the table, that you might tread them under foot, and two parts of the idol Mahadeo, of heavy bronze, were placed on the table by a visible hand. The head of the idol felt to me to weigh four or five pounds.

Mr. Home was lifted about a foot from the ground, but did not float, as he frequently does, in the strongest light. The table, a very heavy loo table, was also several times lifted a foot or more from the ground, and you were invited to look under it and see that there was no visible cause. To us, who have seen so much of these things, to whom they are as familiar as the sight of a bird flying, and far more familiar than the present comet, this was not necessary.

A few evenings afterwards a lady desiring that the "Last Rose of Summer" might be played by a spirit on the accordion, the wish was complied with, but in so wretched a style that the company begged that it might be discontinued. This was done; but soon after, evidently by another spirit, the accordion was carried and suspended over the lady's head, and there, without any visible support or action on the instrument, the air was played through most admirably, in the view and hearing of all.

Do your negatives think that we are all fools and blind—that there are now some four or five millions of fools in the world who don't know a hawk from a hand-saw. That we are demented because we won't gratify their stolidity by saying that we don't see things when we do? For heaven's sake let them sit as long as they please in their darkness; I shall not put out my light to keep them company. None of the stupid successors of Galileo's walking thumbscrews shall ever compel me to say that the world does not turn round, or that spirits don't exist and come palpably amongst us, when they come every day; or that there are not thousands so dense that they can neither see them nor feel them, any more than they can see or feel the electricity of the atmosphere and of their own system, until it is concentrated into the thunderbolt; nor shall they force me to deny that there will be such shallow heads and shallow ponds to the end of time, in which not a single spiritual entity, nor a decent carp, can live, much less swim.

Mr. Penrose, a distinguished member of the Church of England, years ago, in a "Treatise on the Evidence of the Scriptural Miracles," said justly,—“There may be many minds too much imbruted in sense—many too much vitiated by pleasure, and others too conceited and overweening, to be able to perceive or adopt any proposition contrary to the common opinion.” And he logically adds, that “persons who are capable of resisting a clear display of superhuman power must be persons nearly beyond the reach of argument or evidence. They are not of sound mind; and unless their mental obliquity be first rectified, the

causes of right reasoning will be unfit for any application to their faculties.

These observations have been admirably endorsed by the Rev. J. W. Le Bas, now I believe, the Principal of Heytesbury College, who treats the prevailing scepticism as a disease. "There is a certain class of diseases—tetanus, &c.—incident to the human frame, by which the muscles are brought into such a state of inflexible stiffness and contraction, as to resist any violence that can be employed to overcome it. The bodily fabric, while in that morbid condition, would be destroyed before it would yield to the application of force. And I believe that, in the opinion of medical men, this diseased strength and tone, strange as it may appear, is the result of some debility in the general constitution of the patient. Now this deplorable malady appears to furnish an inapt illustration of that rigidity of mind which sometimes holds out against proofs too strong to be resisted by intellects in an ordinary state of sanity. The obstinacy displayed in such instances is often quite prodigious; and yet it might be reasonably surmised that it is connected with some weakness of intellectual power, some irregularity of mental action, quite inconsistent with healthy vigour. But, however this may be, the existence of such instances is but too notorious. There are persons, unhappily, who have the power of setting their face like a flint against the force of any proposition that offends their prejudices, or that stimulates into active resistance certain peculiar elements in their mental composition. With individuals of this class, mathematical demonstration itself would probably be unavailing. As Cudworth said,—'It is credible that were there any interest of life, any excitement of appetite or passion, against the truth of even geometrical theorems,—as of a triangle having its three angles equal to two right angles,—whereby men's judgments might be led and bribed, notwithstanding all demonstration of them, they would remain at least sceptical about them.'"—*Cudworth's* *True Intellectual Principle*.

And adds Le Bas,—“If the Pythagorean proposition, for instance (Euclid, L. 47), were to impose on mathematicians the Pythagorean maxim of a strict vegetable diet, what carnivorous student of geometry would ever get to the end of the first book of Euclid? Or, if we could conceive that the doctrine of fluxions somehow or other, been combined with an obligation to abstain from the use of wine, does any one believe that it would have gained its present undisputed establishment throughout the scientific world? Should we not, at this very day, have a thirsty analyst protesting that he was under an absolute necessity to comprehend or credit the system?”

The disease of scepticism pointed out by Penrose is peculiarly

a Protestant disease. There is no church or people, Christian or pagan, which does not believe in the agency of the spiritual, or the physical, or, in common parlance, in the supernatural. It abounded in every ancient country, however learned or civilized. Confucius and Boodha, Zoroaster and Plato, alike agreed on that point. The myriad peoples of the East, the cradle of creation and of salvation, all to this day retain the firmest conviction of it. Like nations who have lived near the sun, those whose ancestors lived near the Divine Sun of all knowledge, spirit, and power, retain the undying tints of it in their spiritual complexions. The Catholic and the Greek churches have never for a moment abandoned the belief in the whole vital principle and process of Christianity being supernatural; that the operation of divine grace on the heart is a perpetual miracle, is a supernatural action, and that the church still possesses, as an inalienable heritage, the power to work miracles. This is why the Catholic Church has always denied to Protestantism the title of a true church of Christ. "You have no miracles," say they, "and therefore are only a dead form or empty shell, and a mere empty pretence." To cut up root and branch the *lying* miracles of Rome, our reformers cut up the whole principle of the miraculous in the church. They forgot the warning of our Saviour to let the tares, which the devil had sown, grow with the wheat which God had sown, till the harvest, lest they should pull up the wheat too. They pulled up both wheat and tares; the tares of false, the wheat of true miracle. And what is the consequence? The assertion of the Catholics, that "Protestantism is but a slippery highway to Deism," is fast coming true. We have already got to "Essays and Reviews," and a great deal further. The author of "Tom Brown" says that the working classes are fearfully infidelized. I could have told him that twenty years ago, when I went much amongst them. I could have pointed him to a still more terrible destruction of the principle of faith amongst the young, and learned Protestants abroad. Bishop Hall tells us that, in his youth, the celebrated Father Coster "charged the Anglican Church with not possessing one miracle." But he says, "I answered that in our church we had manifest proofs of the ejection of devils by fasting and prayer." Where is the Anglican bishop who would dare to say so much now? In two centuries and a half, the period since Bishop Hall was thus twitted by Coster, the English Church and English Protestantism have made a great march downwards towards Sadduceeism. They *must* go that way so long as they spurn at the plainest principle of Christ's Church—faith in the constant and indestructible connection and communion with the spiritual world, and a participation in its life. They are trees without root; "broken cisterns that can hold no

water:" and the consequence is, that the so-called Christian world is nothing more, after nearly two thousand years, than the old Paganism, in a mask—and most impudent mask. Which of the sins, and the follies, and the corruptions of the Pagans have we, as a nation, renounced? Which of the virtues of Christ have we put on? Are we become the followers of the Prince of *Peace*, or of War? Do men know us as Christ's disciples, because we love one another? Are we not armed to the teeth, we so-called Christians? Are we not deafened with rifles, and ready to bless our enemies with ball cartridge, and do good to those who hate us by sending them to heaven by Armstrong guns? Is the "Social Evil" a proof that we have abandoned foolish and hurtful lusts? Are the continual defalcations in the mercantile world formerly called swindling, proofs of our progress in the gospel of truth and sobriety? If any one thinks that our aristocracy, numbers of whom living in open adultery with their "Pretty Horse-breakers"—not merely single men keeping single women—are any better than the pagans of Rome were in the days of Nero and Domitian, must have strangely forgotten his Juvenal. In fact so long as the root of all spiritual life is plucked out of the heart-soil of the people by the church, and the learned sneer at the presence of the supernatural, the church is a dead machine, which can produce only deadness, and our so-called Christianity is a desperate sham. It would be well for such negatives, that are not quite hopeless, to ponder a little on this peculiar feature of Protestantism—its deviation from all other churches on the question of spirit-life, and manifestations among men.

But, my dear Mr. Barkas, if your negatives are so catalepted in their intellectual tetanus, as not to be able to admit the reality of the familiar and wide-spread phenomena hitherto brought forward, what is to become of them? How are they to swallow, or less digest, the marvels brought by Mr. Coleman from America? Drawings done, and testified to be done, by the attestation of Judge Edmonds, Coleman himself, and numbers of others, without the intervention of any human hand,—done in the presence of these witnesses, time after time, and in the most astonishing fraction of a single minute. I have seen these immensities of direct spirit-drawings, beautifully done in water-colours, the brushes, colours, and paper being laid for them away from all contact, and the active operation of the pencils heard distinctly at work. One of these has a well painted camellia, with several violets in natural colours, and an open book held up by a hand, the extent of the two open pages being, I think, about four inches square, and yet containing two hundred words of the chapter of St. John, beautifully written, and the whole drawn and finished in *twelve seconds*! These drawings, done

under the observation of the most credible witnesses, and numbers of similar things, which will be duly reported, from month to month, in the *Spiritual Magazine*, will require the Know-Nothings to open their shoulders wide in order to get them down. Every day their difficulties are growing and multiplying upon them; the number of sane and practical witnesses is accumulating, and they will soon be obliged to admit their existence, or to sit by the highways of life like those congeners of theirs, with a placard broadly emblazoned on their fronts,—PITY THE POOR BLIND!"

I remain, dear Mr. Barkas,

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM HOWITT.

ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS.

THE existence of seers, prophets, and revelators—of men whose interior faculties are open to a perception of spiritual realities, and who sustain such a relation to the invisible world as to become media or channels of communication between it and the human world on earth, is a fact attested in the experience of every age and race of men; while a general testimony also affirms, what in itself seems sufficiently probable, that there have been crises and periods when instances of this have been more numerous or remarkable than is commonly the case. Thus, in the earlier and simpler ages of the world, when men had less understanding of nature and command of its resources, and their needs were therefore greater, while their minds, less sceptical and sophisticated, were more open and receptive to communication and suggestion from the angel-spheres than in later times, the records and traditions of them that remain impress us with the belief that much more was then imparted from the upper world in relation not only to religion, but to whatever else was most essential to well-being and the right conduct of life than has at any time been common since. But though circumstances and conditions are variant, the laws of man's nature and unfoldment—the powers and receptivities of the spirit inherently and (so to speak) organically remain unchanged. What was possible in the past, is, under conditions equally favourable, possible in the present. Indeed, that the inner perceptions and faculties may be so opened and developed as to o'erleap "this bank and shoal of time," and penetrate beyond the range of sense, is not now a matter of speculation, or even of mere history; its certainty is established by contemporaneous and well-known facts, as presented in and through numerous individuals constantly subject to

these experiences, and who give ample proofs that they are so. The facts on which this assertion rests are known to thousands, and are patent to all who care to inquire into them. It is this knowledge which renders the biography, and still more the autobiography—the faithful record of psychological development and growth—the experiences and history of the inner as well as of the outer man, a record as valuable as it is rare. We are, therefore, fortunate in having the autobiography of, perhaps, the most remarkable man of this class since the illustrious Swedenborg. Indeed, in some respects, Andrew Jackson Davis is a more remarkable psychological phenomenon than even the Swedish seer, inasmuch as, when Swedenborg commenced his revelations and spiritual teachings, he was endowed with a mind of great natural ability, improved by the highest culture, enlarged by long and varied experience, enriched with all the knowledge of the time, and aided by an established reputation and social position; while Davis, as we shall see, began his career of seership and teaching without any of those advantages. An account of him, chiefly derived from his autobiography—*The Magic Staff*—(published three years since in America, where it has had a large sale, but little known in this country), will probably be new, and, we trust, interesting to the majority of our readers. We shall not attempt to enter minutely into the circumstances of his external history, except where it may appear necessary to the right understanding of his spiritual experiences. The reader desirous of further details can consult the above-named work.

Andrew Jackson Davis was born in August, 1826, in a very humble isolated dwelling in Blooming Grove, Orange County, New York, and was one of a family of six children. The father was a poor, illiterate, honest, irascible, and somewhat intemperate hand-loom weaver and village cobbler, subsequently graduating to the more productive and reputable position of journeyman remaker." The mother was domestic, unlettered, affectionate, religious according to her light, and more than ordinarily imbued with rural superstitions, but with genuine spiritual experiences. She often had premonitions of impending calamity. There would occasionally be seen in her that "look of distance—a blankness and introspectiveness of vision" observed in those who possess the gift of "second-sight." "At different times, while engaged at housework, she appeared like one lost in the vision of some off scene. With her great eyes wide open, she would look abstractedly against the wall—or *through it*, as it were, into the unity of a remote and unknown space." "She had real voyance, and, as I think (says her son) real spirit-intercourse. Not being able to distinguish between fact and fancy, her life

became a meandering stream of trial, sadness, and nervous apprehensiveness." From various incidents related by Davis it is evident that more than one of her children possessed this faculty of spiritual vision, though in none of the rest does it seem to have been so fully developed as in the subject of our sketch. At the time of his birth, General Jackson was a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, and his father and uncle permanently recorded their votes for "Old Hickory" in the name they gave to the new comer.

In the matter of school education, young Davis came but poorly off; but the intellectual fare offered him, meagre as it was, was too strong for his weak capacity of mental digestion, and he contrived to take as little of it as possible, having "an inwrought repugnance to the compulsiveness of studying in a book." He went to his first school when ten years of age, where, he says—

Under austere training and vigilant supervision, I progressed into spelling words of two syllables; but so badly and clumsily, that my perpendicular position at the foot of the class became a fixed fact! The great Napoleon never had a sentinel who stood his ground and guarded his outposts more faithfully. My fundamental position, as logicians say, was well taken; nor do I remember that I had the misfortune to be displaced more than three or four times, and then only for a few minutes. But this teacher was quite gentle and patient with me, withal, and concluded to set me at the multiplication table. He wished to make me believe, through my understanding, that *that table* was laden with sumptuous articles for the juvenile intellect. He didn't convince me at all! Writing lessons came next. But the cramping of my thumb-joint, in order to hold the quill just as the other scholars did, had the effect to postpone my penmanship to a period remote and indefinite.

He got on pretty well with the *pictures* in *Peter Parley's Pictorial Geography*, but his memory seemed to have an unconquerable aversion to words, dates and names. "The Map of the World," he continues, "looked to me something like a *cobweb* into which the bookmaker had dumped here and there a mass of words, too hard to be either spelled or spoken; and hence, notwithstanding the captivating influence of the pictures and images of houses and of strange people, I could not make any headway with my geographical studies." At intervals he went to other schools with much the same result, the whole amount of his attendance at places of instruction "made little more than five months." The father averred that he "would never earn his salt," "that he hadn't gumption enough to make a whistle;" his teacher called him "a blockhead," and his sisters "a dummy;" in short, the general verdict on trial of his intellectual capabilities was decidedly against him. He was, however, a shy, harmless, inoffensive lad, fond of solitary rambles, and every now and then would ask unexpected and sometimes puzzling questions; but he does not seem to have been at all imaginative, or inclined to view things in a romantic light. He says—"I remember that I valued trees, in hot weather, for their fruit and their shade;

in winter months, for the firewood they made after being laboriously sawed and split. Stones existed, to build fences with; grass, for cows to eat; water, for all to drink; the sun, to keep us warm; the rain, to make vegetation grow; the snow, that children might ride down hill; the ice, to slide and play upon; And thus, throughout the entire programme of my juvenile experiences, I valued all objects and sensations—my parents and sisters included—in proportion as they administered to the desires and gratifications of my bodily needs and sensibilities.’ ”

The first impressions and memories of childhood must be valuable as data in our reasonings on mental philosophy, but, unfortunately, these can seldom be recovered, and are still more rarely recorded, any stray instance of the kind that we may meet should be the more welcome; we, therefore, transcribe freely from what Mr. Davis has recorded as “My First Memories.”—

Three years and a few weeks had glided away ere memory received the news that, without and beyond itself, there existed an objective world. This was in the autumn of 1829. I was in the open air, with my face toward a small, weather-beaten, lonely house, but which, to my inexperienced mind, looked like a very spacious and wonderful superstructure. Whether I had ever been in it or not, I could not remember. Towering trees environed the humble domicile; and a road, the use of which I could form no conception, stretched away through the dreamy depths of the encircling wilderness.

“What are them high things called?” I soliloquised, viewing the erect and very trees so very far above my head. “And what’s that called?” I asked, pointing my finger toward the dilapidated tenement, the dimensions of which seemed so great.

But, quicker than thought, there flashed athwart my nature a dreadful feeling of loneliness and helpless desolation; and awaking, as it were, from a dream of hope and anxiety, I screamed a word, the sound of which I had till then no knowledge of my power to make—*Mother! mother!* Like the fabulous Robinson Crusoe, while a lone wanderer on the island of Juan Fernandez, I started in surprise at the cry with which my own voice broke the deep silence. And yet, I can now well remember, there was something in the term “Mother” which seemed familiar and full of blessed significance. Like a magic wand, it appeared to open a narrow pathway through some well-known landscape: and this pathway ultimately culminated in certain definite enclosures—perhaps, reproducing an idea of the rooms in the rural dwelling already described as my birthplace.

What is ‘Mother?’ I could not tell. Whether it had form, size, and dimensions, or was the absence of these, I could not decide. Two sensations I felt: my personal littleness, made more appalling by the contrast of the great and immense house before me; and my *desolate state*, more terrifying because I could see nothing like myself in any direction. When I screamed ‘Mother!’ I evidently appreciated the fact that I was soliciting, imploring, beseeching, the presence of *something* which could make me feel warm, safe, loved, and happy—something of which I was a part, a lesser portion—without which I would be cold, hungry, thirsty and miserable. But, strange as it may seem, it is true nevertheless, that I could not or did not form the least conception of the objective appearance of that indefinite something which I called ‘Mother,’ and which I fully realised to be somehow related to my safety and well-being. This fact I now regard as being rich in value to all metaphysicians.

..... child’s first ideas of a Supreme Being and of death, and

the genesis of these ideas in the child's mind will, we feel sure, be also interesting. In the case of Davis, this occurred soon after the event last recorded. He had just witnessed, for the first time, a prolonged loquacious struggle between his parents. "The effect of which," he says, "still lingers as the most shocking impression ever made upon my infantile mind."—

Well enough do I remember, after getting under the clothes in the trundle-bed that night, of thinking thus: "I wonder whether the Big Good Man up in the sky seen that! If he did, what does he think about it?" While meditating thus, I was seized with a *strange terror*; and, as the most natural thing, I screamed "Mother!" with all my vocal power.

"What is the matter, Jackson?" she quickly and kindly asked.

"I don't know," I cried; "I'm 'fraid to go to sleep. D'you think I'll wake up again, if I go to sleep?"

"O, yes, my son—nothing'll hurt you." And so I tried to believe. But 'twas impossible. What troubled me I knew not, except a terrifying apprehensiveness that I should not open my eyes again if I slept, and the dreaded loneliness of an endless sleep. It reminded me of what I felt when our mother was *lost* in the forest. Therefore I begged to get in bed with my parents, for there only could I feel safe in slumber.

"Don't humour that boy so!" said my father, sternly; 'taint nothin' but worms ailin' him."

Now, though a very little child, I felt that I *knew better*; and so, for the first time, I found my mind rejecting my own father's judgment. Here was individual sovereignty in a trundle-bed. But this unexpected development of an opinion, in positive opposition to my worthy and venerable progenitor, served only to add more strength to my indescribable terror. Having no knowledge of words wherewith to dispute my father's worm-theory, I cried and continued to cry, until, perhaps to get rid of me, I was taken by mutual consent into the protective embrace of the sympathising mother—wherein, feeling a blissful security out of harm's way, I soon forgot all trouble in a slumber too sound for dreams.

On reflection, I have since concluded that my awakening spirit, young and untutored as it was, had received on this occasion some vaguely intuitive conception of Deity and Death. An idea of the "Big Good Man" had never been imparted to me by any person that I could remember; neither had I ever witnessed such a shocking event as "going to sleep and not waking again," which formed the groundwork of my childish apprehensions. Therefore, I put this down as an interesting psychological fact, impairing the doctrine that denies to the soul an innate organic knowledge of corresponding outward realities.

Soon after the birth of Andrew, the parents removed to Staatsburg, New York—the scene of his "First Memories," and in 1832, they again changed their residence to Hyde Park, Dutchess County, New York. And here occurred an incident, which seems to show that he was even then subject to spiritual impressions. He was in a childish rage, under what, as a child, he felt a great provocation, and vented his passion alone by swearing with all the hard and ugly words he could call to mind, though of course he could have had but a small and obscure perception of their meaning—

Twilight (he says) had died away in darkness, in which I stood alone and enveloped. Serenely shone the evening stars. Not a breath of air moved the foliage in the garden; not a sound could I hear from the apple-orchard; not a sigh of sadness from the woods whence the brush had been so laboriously obtained. • Still, very still, too still, was all the world—within the reach of my

physical senses—at the moment when I so wilfully disturbed the scene with my terrible profanity.

Hark! What's *that*? In an instant after I had vented my rage, there passed into mine ear an exclamation, heavy laden with that mysterious condemnation which penetrated me to the very core of my being—"WHY, JACKSON."

'Twas my mother's voice—or I thought it was—and in a moment my frame quivered and shook with fear. Darkness fell round about me with a sudden and alarming density. The very air seemed undulated and convulsed, as by the breaths of some offended deity. A swift wind seemingly circumgyrated and buzzed close to my head, and, as I imagined, lifted my cap and replaced it several times.

"*Why, Jackson!*" Once only heard I these plain words; but they thrilled me with an unaccountable horror. They unmistakably conveyed, and awakened in me toward myself, *astonishment, rebuke, grief, commiseration!* "O pshaw! What's the use bein' 'fraid of mother?" soliloquised I; "She can't blame me, how." This thought refreshed my courage; and though still uncontrollably agitated, into the house I went, and poutingly exclaimed: "Don't care if you'd hear me swear. 'Twas too bad, anyhow!"

Fortunately, the maternal ear alone heard my spontaneous confession.

Believing the voice he heard to have been his mother's, he made to her a full confession, and of course received from her a very grave and serious reproof. But what was his astonishment to find that her's was not the voice he had heard. He asked—

"Didn't you hear me?"

"Mercy save us!" she exclaimed. "No, I didn't hear you; and I'm thankful I didn't. Providence know'd I couldn't bear to hear my boy speak such words."

This answer astonished me greatly. "Then, who called me?" said I, who hollered so loud, and said, 'Why, Jackson?' I tho't 'twas you; but 't' so dark, I couldn't see. Must be 'twas Julia Ann."

"No, 'twasn't nuther!" returned my quietly-listening sister. "This is the I've heard of your swearin'—an' I hope to mercy 'twill be the last."

The effect of the lesson altogether, he says, "was so deep and so impressive, that never, from that date to this hour, have I been conscious of uttering a profane word."

When eleven years of age, he went to work at a flour mill to mend the hopper, and while here somnambulism began to be developed in him. He says—

thousand shadowy forms of wheels and revolving upright shafts would fill the entire surface of my brain. Besides those mill-works which I had seen during the day, I could perceive and comprehend the operation of new machines. Complete machines for splitting shingles, for grinding grains, for raising plaster-stones, for sawing and planing boards, for doing the drudgery of the kitchen-work usually imposed upon woman—these and several other very different representations of mechanical improvements would weave themselves into the substance of my daily experiences—all brought together, and yet never mingled, during the silence of the bending and brooding night.

He remained at the flour mill only a few weeks. Next he was put to his hand at helping the clerk of a store, but his ignorance of figures and clumsy habits soon procured him his discharge. In 1838, being attacked with bilious fever, the visiting physician called in his anxious mother—

"Our son must not drink cold water, ma'am. His case is a very critical

one. The least cold taken at this stage of salivation, ma'am, will endanger his life."

The careful reader is already aware of my lively dread of dying. The thought of ceasing to breathe—of closing my eyes for ever—of being put in a coffin—of that confinement in the ground—was inexpressibly horrible. And yet, notwithstanding this awful dread added to the physician's emphatic warning, I seemed to hear something whispering—"*You—may—drink—the—sweet—water—of—maple—trees.*" At first I thought it was but a fever dream; the suggestions of my burning thirst; a hint from the liquid fire that coursed wildly through my veins. But 'twas twice whispered between mid-day and evening. The breathing thereof was refreshingly welcome. And I could not longer restrain myself. The voice was like imagination's—very low, clear, sweet, dreamy, influential. Hesitating no more, I told mother every word of my supposed dream—and insisted that, early in the next morning's dawn, I must drink the sap of sugar-maple. She believed with me, cherished my request, and obtained from the tapped trees a pailful of their drippings. Freely and fearlessly—yea, in perfect faith—I drank of the cooling water! What followed this draught? A substantial convalescence; and, in a few weeks, physical health and hopefulness.

Shortly after his recovery from this illness, he found employment at a neighbouring farm, principally to watch and keep cattle. While employed here, an incident occurred which we transcribe at length—

I became quite handy with the hoe, and so had a day's work marked out for me. One extremely warm day, however, when I chanced to be left alone at my appointed task, in the middle of a twenty-acre cornfield, my attention was arrested by the sound of sweet, low, and plaintive music. It seemed to emanate from the airy space above me, and had a pathos like the sighing of autumnal winds. Being far away from trees and human habitations, its source was unaccountable. Unlike anything I had ever before heard, it appeared to be breathing in the very fibres of my brain—yea, through the substance of my inner being and throbbing heart—awakening there the tenderest emotions, and filling my juvenile mind with loving sympathies toward the unknown human world. Previous to this moment I had entertained no enlarged affection for strangers. The idea of loving anybody not loved by my immediate relatives, or of disliking persons who were openly recognised as the friends of our humble little household, never appeared to me before this as being other than unnatural and blameworthy. Indeed, my sympathies and antipathies, like those of uneducated youth generally, were bounded by the selfish affinities of the family group. But, now, there was born in me an inexpressible yearning to know and love everything human. I seemed to be lifted, as by a miracle, above the mists of selfishness. While I listened, confounded and transfixed with joy and wonderment combined, I seemed distinctly to hear, floating down upon the glistening solar ray, as it were, and indescribably blending with the Æolian strains of the mysterious melody, these words:—" *You—may—desire—to—travel!*"

Breathless and exhausted with increased amazement, I stood leaning on the handle of the hoe, by which I kept my trembling form from falling, nervously hearkening—oh, how intensely!—for whatever else might reach me through the dreamy music of the abounding air. But, ere I knew it, the oppressive silence of the immense field was upon me, and only familiar objects in the surrounding distance reflected themselves upon my wondering gaze. For three or four days afterward the enchantment lingered upon me. I would involuntarily halt near the charmed spot, all forgetful of my work, and devote myself to wishing for another strain of atmospheric harmony so delightful.

No further experience of this kind appears to have occurred to him for several months. But, "one day," he says, "while clearing some new ground for a crop of buck-wheat, methought

I heard that marvellous music again! I was fortunately alone at my work, and could devote myself to giving audience. When first I listened, no extraordinary sound reached my nervously-intensified ear. Anon, however, the pure and bird-like melody floated dreamily through the heavens! and again all was silent."

This naturally brought to his mind the mysterious music and language he had before heard in the corn-field; but his mental questioning concerning it appeared to elicit no response. "Returning my work at length," he says, "with the conclusion that had only been imagining music, I heard, apparently near my ear, the same well-remembered voice, whispering, 'To—Poughkeepsie.' With the celerity of thought, the whole matter flashed intelligibly before me. 'What!' I exclaimed, 'then I may desire to travel to Poughkeepsie?' I waited for a reply, but none descended. From that hour, however, I yearned to have our domestic interests removed to that mysteriously specified locality." After a while, on various pretexts, he made the suggestion to his father, and induced him to think of it; and the latter, finding he could get a situation of steady work there, and that rooms suitable for his family could be had, removed there in the autumn of 1839.

Soon after their removal here, business became bad and employment scarce. The father took to a retail grocery store; but having no capital and little credit, the sheriff's officer soon closed up the business. So distressed were they, that young Elias at length plucked up courage to state their case to a wealthy neighbour, of whom he begged some cold victuals, to save the family from actual starvation; but his application was met with a gruff refusal. Returning home, distressed and anxious, a thought struck him "like lightning," which led him to a new source of employment, which, to his great joy, enabled him for several weeks to purchase food for the family. At that time, he became the subject of so singular an experience, we shall place it before the reader in his own language—

Near the close of a chilly day, February 2, 1841, when I was about to open the back-yard gate which separated our door from the public street, something like a black veil suddenly dropped over my face, shutting out every object and leaving me in utter darkness. I groped and fumbled my way along like a blind boy, as if in a dark night, while the sun was yet shining in the west. My consciousness was much the same as when under the somnambulist's trance; but, in that condition, my closed eyes now could discern nothing, and my unfeeling feet stumbled against unperceived obstacles. When, while I was without, feeling for the gate-latch, all space seemed to be suddenly filled with a golden radiance! The world was transformed! Winter and icy barriers had melted and glided away; warm breezes played with the sunbeams; fruit trees were blossoming in the garden before me; bright angels sent out their melodious songs upon the perfumed air; new and beautiful mansions decorated the margins of many paths that led to a gorgeous palace, where stood where the tenant-house was just a few moments previous; a celest-

tial bloom and an immortal loveliness shone forth everywhere; and I heard what, as on other occasions, sounded like my mother's voice calling as from an unseen window of the palatial superstructure—"Come here, child: I—want—to—show—you—my—new—house!"

Without an emotion of astonishment or haste, (at which I am even now astonished), I opened the begemmed gate before me, which gave out music from its very hinges, and then I walked calmly through the pure air, between the spraying fountains, beneath the waving gleeful trees, amid the diversified bloom and unwasting glory, until I gained the gilded door of my mother's high and holy home!

A moment I hesitated, thinking "How shall I act if she's got visitors?" The thought departed, and, rustic-like, I knocked *loudly* against the bespangled and over-arched door. No answer! While waiting for admission, I turned to review the magnificent habitation. With thought's own speed, I recalled the many miserable houses we had occupied. The contrast made *this* lovelier than all else my mind had ever imagined. My bosom swelled with ineffable pride—then with a gladness—which made me shout and dance. I think my joy was very fantastic and boisterous: for, in the midst thereof, the stately door swung open, and a familiar Hibernian neighbour raised her forefinger ominously, and said: "Jist wait a bit. It's yer own poor mother that's a dyin'! Yer a bould lad to be killin' her, swate heart, wid yer noise. It's a power o' sad news for ye. Shure an' dyin's no play. Go in softly—put yer pail snoogly away upstairs—thin go an' spake a bit to yer mother."

All this solemn talk seemed extremely ridiculous! Couldn't I see? Didn't I know better? The hall before me was spacious, the walls glittered with golden embellishments, the stairs to which she pointed were radiant with flowery carpetings, and wasn't I the proud son of the healthy and happy mother who owned the palace?

I had as I thought evidence enough that the sympathetic lady of Erin was simply checking my mirth, so that the joy of our new home might break more calmly on my mind. And so I wouldn't be restrained. Laughing aloud at her foolish words of caution, I bounded by her through the enamelled doorway. In an instant the resplendent vision vanished! *The black veil* was again before me! It fell—and, lo! the ill-furnished room—the darkened bed—the emaciated woman—alas! I stood in the midst of poverty and death! Who can portray my feelings? The doctor whispered—"She's dying!"

Such was the effect of this vision upon him, that though his love to his mother was stronger than to all else, he could even thank Providence for removing her from her earthly troubles to those brighter mansions to which he felt assured her spirit had now departed. He tells us—"My spirit had no tears for the sepulchral urn! The ashes of the dead contained the germs of life. The sealed eyes, the faded smile, the pallid lips, the dew of death—what were these to me? signs and symbols of a new creation! Celestial perfection, beyond all speech, was set like a diadem on the brow of Nature. I was present at the coronation of the unknown!"

In 1842 he was apprenticed to a Mr. Armstrong, a worthy boot and shoe merchant, in which situation—though sometimes "rigged for his blundering orthography," such as writing orders for "red morocco children's shoes," and "pegged men's cowhide boots"—he appears to have been very kindly treated, and, as he relates:—

Being allowed the freedom of the house and the yard, the children would

frequently unite with and aid me in trying to sing Washingtonian temperance songs. One Sunday, while singing—

“Where are the friends that to me were so dear,
Long, long ago?” &c.—

there happened a pleasing mystical circumstance, of which I was the sole recipient. When we sung the words “In their graves laid low,” I heard the word “No!” distinctly and emphatically shouted in my ear.

“Don’t do that, Russell,” said I to the eldest son.

“Do what?” he enquired, with a look of surprise.

“Don’t holler ‘No!’ when ‘tain’t in the song,” I pleadingly exclaimed.

“I didn’t,” he quickly replied; “and I didn’t hear it neither.”

The younger children, Austin and Freddy, also denied any participation. So we proceeded with our singing. But whenever we sung the affirmation that our friends are “In their graves laid low,” I would hear the negative “No!” as clear and positive as any word pronounced by ourselves. At the time, I could not comprehend it.

In the autumn of 1843 a Mr. Grimes delivered in Poughkeepsie several lectures on mesmerism, illustrated with experiments. Among the persons on whom the lecturer tried to operate was young Davis; but in this instance his most powerful efforts failed to produce any apparent effect. Considerable excitement had, however, been created in the village by these lectures and experiments; and among others who were induced to test their own powers in producing the mesmeric phenomena as a Mr. Levingstone, a master tailor. Calling at Mr. Armstrong’s store, he related, in the presence of Davis, many successful experiments that he had performed; and finding Davis to be interested, he proposed that he should call at his house in the evening, and he would try to magnetise him. The experiment was made, and was eminently successful—the boy exhibiting powers of clairvoyance which were truly surprising. A great variety of tests were submitted, such as requiring him to see and describe places where he had never been, to read from a closed volume with his eyes bandaged, &c.; and the result was to establish his power of interior sight beyond dispute. This experiment took place about the 1st of December, 1843.

From this time he was frequently thrown into the clairvoyant state, and for months Mr. Levingstone’s house became nightly a resort of the curious, invitations to witness the experiments being freely and indiscriminately extended. As Davis came more fully under the operator’s magnetic influence, it had for him an increasing fascination, till at length, with the consent of Armstrong, he gladly, without any stipulations or definite expectations, accepted Mr. Levingstone’s invitation to live with him as one of the family. Immediately following this occurred a remarkable experience detailed in our last number.*

He soon manifested, while clairvoyant, a considerable power

* In the article entitled, “Spiritual Perception of Nature.”

of perceiving the nature and seat of diseases in the human constitution, and their appropriate remedies. On the evening of March 6th, 1844, he had been with Mr. Levingstone to make a clairvoyant examination of a sick person. This having been effected, the operator endeavoured, for a long time ineffectually, to demagnetise him. At length, however, this seemed accomplished, though he felt a painful prejudice to the several spheres of those present. On entering the street he imagined that his system still retained a portion of the imparted influence, which was "confirmed by a sudden and paralysing illumination in the region of the intellectuals." He felt confused and powerless, but at length reached home, and laid himself down on the bed in extreme agitation both of body and mind, and slept. He was awakened by a sensation as of brisk fanning over his face, but on opening his eyes and seeing nothing he concluded he had been dreaming, and tried to sleep again. Presently, however, he heard a voice like his mother's, which said "*Arise!—dress—thyself—and—follow—me.*" In a minute he was dressed, and in the street. He says "My feet clung to nothing. There was no friction, and I fled with a fleetness indescribable. The unseen power conducted me to the sidewalk corner of Mill and Hamilton-streets, where there were at this time no dwellings. My mind was instantly sobered. 'What can this mean?' I mentally queried. 'What a change!' " While meditating thus under the solemn beauty of the starry night, there passed before his mind the following vision:—

A strange sound now vibrated on my ear. I looked, and lo, I beheld, with admiration, a shadowy congregation of clean and beautiful sheep! The flock was large, and their condition poor. Their bodies, however, were perfectly *white*; and they manifested great gentleness of disposition. Shortly, I was impressed with the following interpretation; which I now apprehend as true, and giving the *use* of the symbolic scene:—

"The sheep corresponded to the vast brotherhood of mankind. Their beautiful external whiteness corresponded to the innate purity and goodness of all, indicating that all are capable of material refinement and spiritual elevation. The poverty of their bodies corresponded to the wretched physical condition of the earth's inhabitants. Their social affections are disunited; they are opposed to each other's highest *good* and happiness; and their spiritual sympathies are misdirected. Yea, the whole human race represents a flock of sheep, whose shepherd is the Universal Father!"

These truths flowed into my unfolded mind as freely as rain falls from heaven to earth. I recognised their use and importance. But I continued my meditation. The sheep remained at peace as when I first saw them. But now, as I comprehended the meaning intended, they began to change their position—seemingly desiring some *fold* wherein they might rest undisturbed. Being greatly confused, they proceeded to pass along the street in such a way as would have shown (had they been men) that their judgments were *weak* or impaired, and that they were thus incapable of choosing the proper and righteous path which would have led them to that goal which all seemed to be seeking.

At the next moment I beheld a shepherd. His sudden and spiritual appearance surprised me not; and I approached him as a divine friend. I saw that he was much perplexed, yet fully determined (though inefficient) to urge the sheep

hence where peace and harmony reigned. He had great elegance of form, and was plainly and usefully attired. He presented an air of unassuming and stately dignity—to be admired in any being. His countenance, and sky-blue eyes, indicated purity. His whole appearance was that of a kind and gentle being—endowed with physical and spiritual perfection. On my approach he spake not, but expressed in simple language (by the illumination of his countenance) the desires of his soul. He needed sympathy and assistance. The sheep were in ignorance and confusion which he had laboured to overcome. They required gentle but regular discipline. To his request I immediately acceded. By a powerful exertion, we succeeded in establishing order among them—to which they mutually adhered—whereupon, as if substantial beings, they and their delighted shepherd naturally proceeded down the street. Their uniform motions seemed to melt into one harmonious movement, till they faded and vanished amid surrounding objects that formed the distant scene.

With impressive solemnity, and illuminated by a rosy light, the whole scene came and passed away. Upheld by the unseen power, I was tranquil throughout the amazing representation. The following significance of its closing part was also made distinctly manifest:—"The beautiful shepherd corresponded to a great and noble reformer, whose spirit breathed '*peace on earth and goodwill to men*;' whose exalted wisdom comprehended the many physical and spiritual requirements of the human race; whose grand system of moral government transcended all others conceived since intelligence pervaded the bosom of Nature. The state of painful confusion into which the sheep were thrown, corresponded to the confused condition of the theological world—to the conflicts between truth and error, reason and theology, reality and imagination, theory and practice—and, lastly, to the intense anxiety of each person who desires, but cannot believe in, immortal life. The request that so benignly beamed forth from his fair countenance, noted that I, like all men, am called to perform a moral part in life's sacred drama." So I am compelled to report: first, because the instruction, intended by the beautiful representation, flowed into my mind irresistibly, and regardless of my own thoughts at the moment: and, second, because my personal transportation to that portion of the village was produced and governed by a power superior to myself.

But the scene now changed. I stood almost free from thought; the blood flooded in my exposed body; my head and chest were painfully congested; I was crowded with a death-like darkness, and became almost insensible. I struggled and gasped for breath; but the effort failed. Life had almost fled. All was cold, dark, deathly. I made a feeble effort to escape that lonely death, and then fell unconsciously to the ground.

Anon, he was awakened and caused to run as before with bounding fleetness many many miles over a new road, and then across the frozen river Hudson, and after a short period of rest, another wonderful vision was presented to him. On returning to his normal state, he found on inquiry that he was near the Catskill Mountains, and that Poughkeepsie was distant about forty miles on the other side of the Hudson. Twice on his way homeward did he experience a return of these strange feelings and spiritual illuminations, preceded by a closing of the outward senses. On the second occasion, "I experienced," he says, "a strange sensation, unlike any other, upon the front and side of the head, in the region of the organ of ideality. Its increasing action caused me to turn in the direction whence it proceeded,

I beheld a man of ordinary stature, but of a spiritual appearance. He approached, and, without speaking, turned to the right of me, and furnished himself with a similar seat. As by in-

stinct, I observed that he was a lover of Nature and of truth—had a constant thirst for knowledge—and was endowed with strong powers of investigation. His quick natural perception, sustained by his highly-cultivated faculties of intuition and reflection, presented a combination of intellectual powers seldom witnessed. He was a being whom I felt constrained to love—for love was prompted by his superior wisdom. I felt quiet and happy. And it is a truth, that I conversed with him, and he with me, for a long period, and that too, by a mutual *influx* and reflux of thought."

This conversation related to the investigations, which, when in the body, his spiritual visitor had made into the laws of life in all its ascending forms, and the system of medical treatment he had deduced therefrom.* A few words of counsel were then addressed to the seer by another stranger of majestic presence, expressive of a high degree of spirituality. He subsequently learned that these men had been respectively known as Galen and Swedenborg, though up to this time he had not even heard their names. On reaching home, bewildered by his strange experiences, he could only reply to the inquiry where he had been since last night:—"I've been a long journey, and seen many curious sights; but I can't make out what it all means."

In the evening, on being magnetised, he was surrounded as usual by "large-eyed and open-mouthed seekers for signs and wonders;" and clever knowing people, with cunningly devised tests. But "besides these there was a group of the sick, and sore, and suffering—persons who not only *wanted* to be convinced, but actually *needed* what they wanted—a true report of their condition, *and a knowledge of the most direct means of restoration.*

Having passed into the clairvoyant state, he saw that in the immediate future, which was opened out before him, an entire change of programme was to be made. He says—

A grand joy pervaded my soul—for I saw that there was a sublime use even in the exercise of clairvoyance—a substantial benefit to sore, and lame, and blind Humanity! O the happiness, the ecstatic bliss, of that world-wide view! There was a lofty grandeur in the philanthropic emotions with which I felt inspired and strengthened. There was a new benefit in existence. My happiness consisted in the certainty that I was to bestow health, to snatch from death the suffering infant, to guide the blind man into light, to sound the voice of healing in the ear of the deaf, to be a support when disease oppressed my neighbour, and a staff of strength to the sick who stepped in the path that lay before me. And yet, friendly reader, I was not lifted up with self-importance. The blessed work that I saw to do, instead of exciting my self-esteem, almost oppressed and overcame my soul. My gratitude was very deep; the responsibility would be weighty, and my life was to become a sober reality.

The prolonged silence, or rather my incommunicativeness, induced the operator to ask, "Can you see anything to-night, Jackson?"

"Oh, yes!" I ejaculated with enthusiastic emotion, "I have some new directions to give. I now see the good of my late visions."

* This system is developed in the *Great Harmonia*, Vol. 1.

He then proceeded, still in clairvoyance, to tell the operator that they must make a change, and spend no more time upon wonder-seekers.

"How, then, shall we convince the unbelieving?" inquired the operator.

"By doing good," I enthusiastically replied; "by examining and prescribing for the sick."

"Must your powers be confined exclusively to the sick?" he asked, with a little show of disappointment.

"Yes, after this," I replied; and then proceeded to give ample directions. Our future time was to be systematically employed. Certain hours were to be devoted to diseased applicants. I was to remain in the clairvoyant state only just so long (two hours and a half) at each sitting; the magnetic process was to be conducted thus and so; and our time was to be rewarded by a charge of a moderate fee to those only who were in easy circumstances.

Of all this, however, no knowledge was then brought by the clairvoyant into his normal state. His magnetizer was a prosperous and thriving tradesman, but, impelled by his love of humanity, he resolved to devote himself to this work, though with no certain prospect before him but a continuance of the petty persecution and pecuniary loss he had already sustained.

It will be borne in mind that at this time the "Rochester knockings" and attendant phenomena with their mysterious import had not begun their work of startling the age from the deep sleep of materialism into which it was fast sinking; and, though clairvoyance was not unknown, "healing mediums" were not yet an institution. It may then be easily imagined that the wonderful cures which began to be performed under the direction of an ignorant shoemaker's apprentice, soon led to considerable excitement, mostly of the unpleasant sort; and to some outcry, from professional persons in particular. Still many weak ones preferred being restored to health by this irregular method to being handed over to the undertaker by a licensed practitioner. The correct diagnosis of the clairvoyant at once inspired the patient with confidence, and by the same faculty he readily perceived the agent best adapted to restore health to the diseased organism; or to quote his words, "The existence of this supply, this agent, this remedy for disease, I first felt as by an instinctive sympathy; and then, in nearly every instance, I would proceed to exercise my power of vision to see in what field, or book, or drug-store, the required article was located or described. In this same silent and mysterious manner—that is, by looking through space, direct into Nature's laboratory, or else into medical establishments, I easily acquired the common (and even the *Greek* and *Latin*) names of various medicines, and also of many parts of the human structure—its anatomy, its physiology, its neurology, &c.; all of which greatly astonished the people, and myself not less when not clairvoyant—for then I had to rely solely upon hearsay and gossip—and, what is not a little strange and paradoxical,

during the first years of my medical experience I could not give a satisfactory solution of my own method. In fact, I did not comprehend the extent and import of my own perceptions."

"It may be difficult," he says, "for the reader to keep in remembrance the vast contrast between my mind illuminated and unilluminated. Twenty strokes of the magnetizer's hand would change and promote me from an ignorant youth to the high elevation of the profound philosopher." Mr. Fishbough, who was present at several of his medical examinations, remarks, "While in the latter (the clairvoyant) state he appeared as if metamorphosed into a totally different being. The human system seemed entirely transparent to him, and to our utter astonishment he employed the technical terms of anatomy, physiology, and *materia medica*, as familiarly as household words! Our surprise was equally excited by the *exceeding* clearness with which he described and reasoned upon the nature, origin, and progress of a disease, and concerning the appropriate means to employ for its removal. From infallible indications presented, we saw that there could be no collusion or deception, and no such thing as receiving the impressions sympathetically from the mind of the magnetizer." It was not till he entered upon the highest—the state of independent clairvoyance (*i. e.*, clairvoyance, free from direct instigation) that he was able to carry the knowledge acquired by him in clairvoyance into the natural state.

Though the exercise of his clairvoyant faculty continued to be directed mainly to the cure of disease, yet, occasionally, other tests of a remarkable character would be given; such as giving "a perfect daguerreotype" of the house and family of a friend of a visitor in New Portland, 500 miles distant. He also records several spiritual visions—some, in a series of tableaux, representing his personal history and mental states past and future; others, impressing certain lessons on his mind by scenic and pictorial representation. Probably, these visions may also have been designed to effect in him, by the influx of spiritual magnetism, certain psychical changes essential to his future work and more complete development. One of these visions appears to have suggested to him the title of his book. At the time of its occurrence he was considerably depressed by jeering remarks he had heard, and by his inability to retain what had been imparted to him in the abnormal state, and he supplicated Providence to show him what was right, and to restore to him what he had lost or forgotten. In a former vision—a cane or staff possessing some remarkable and valuable qualities had been presented to him, but on his exhibiting anger and irritation at a slight obstacle in his path, it was withdrawn, with a promise that it should, in due

season, be given him to keep. Immediately following his prayer, he tells us—

There was a quick flash of light! Alarmed, I glanced around the room. Nothing but a faint star light relieved the intense darkness. Again I bowed my head and again the dazzling flash! I looked, and beheld an oblique line of light—an exact image of the cane shown and given me by Galen! Instantly my memory returned! I perfectly knew the beautiful gift, and reached forth my hand to receive it. 'Twas gone! Darkness was again there, and, in my mind, a feeling of unsuppressed displeasure.

Time passed—perhaps half-an-hour—ere I ventured again to supplicate: “Forgive my hastiness, my momentary anger, kind Providence; but do grant, I pray thee, that I may get and keep that beautiful cane!”

Another flash of golden light shot through the abounding darkness, and, looking up, I beheld a strange, transparent sheet of whiteness, on which was painted glowing words that seemed to burn and beam and brighten amid the silent air. I was not frightened, but charmed! Calmly I read the radiant words—

“ Behold !
HERE IS THY MAGIC STAFF :
UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES KEEP AN EVEN MIND.
Take it, Try it, Walk with it,
Talk with it, Lean on it, Believe on it,
For Ever.”

Over and over again read I those glowing, glittering, transplendent words of wondrous significance. But a doubt seized me, and I asked: “Is that longest sentence my Magic Staff—‘*Under all circumstances keep an even mind*’—is that my cane, which I thought I had lost or forgotten?” In a twinkling the sheet of whiteness vanished, and in its place was beautifully beaming forth the reply—“YES.” 'Twas enough! My soul swelled with thanksgivings! “The Magic Staff, then, is no fiction,” I joyfully thought; “the secret is to take it, try it, walk with it, talk with it, lean on it, believe on it, for ever.” Yes, friendly reader, I seized this mental cane—the magic staff—and ran downstairs, went out in the open air, walked the streets, returned to my bed, lay down with it by my side, arose with it in the morn, ate breakfast with it, examined the sick with it, leaned on it whenever things went wrong, believed on it at all times, and thus trudged I along down toward the intervening valley.

In August, 1845, Mr. Davis's state appearing to require a change of magnetizers, he, while in the clairvoyant state, chose for his future magnetizer Dr. Lyon, of Bridgport, a physician of considerable practice, who had been convinced of the truth of clairvoyance by the evidence which the case of Davis presented. Dr. Lyon accepting the appointment, they proceeded, in accordance with directions given by Davis in the interior state, to New York, where, as he had announced while illuminated, in the previous May, certain lectures on subjects of importance were to be given by him, but of the nature of which he was kept uninformed. For three months after their arrival in New York, Davis continued to be magnetised daily for the exercise of his medical clairvoyance, and it was not till within two days of their commencement, on the evening of November the 28th, that the arrangements connected with the delivery of these discourses was finally made.

There was no public notification of them, but three respectable witnesses were appointed—the Rev. J. N. Parker, Dr. T. Lea Smith, and Theron R. Lapham. The Rev. Wm. Fishbough, of New Haven, was appointed scribe. Davis now, for the first time, entered (permanently) on what he calls “The Superior Condition.”* And now before proceeding further, suppose (adopting his suggestion) “We take an inventory of his intellectual stock, and check down each article at its marketable valuation. “The circumference of his head is unusually small. If ‘size is the measure of power,’ then this youth’s mental capacity is unusually limited. His lungs are weak and unexpanded. If ‘the mind is invigorated in proportion to the capacity of the chest,’ then this youth’s mind must be feeble and circumscribed in its operations. He had not dwelt in the midst of refining influences. If ‘circumstances mould the character,’ then this youth’s manners must be ungentle and awkward. He has not read a book save one, and that on a very unimportant subject; he knows nothing of grammar or the rules of language; neither has he associated with literary or scientific persons. If ‘tis education forms the youthful mind,’ then is this youth’s intellectual stock too meagre for the literary market.”

These lectures (157 in all) occupy nearly 800 printed pages in large octavo.. Among those who attended their delivery was Edgar A. Poe and Professor George Bush. The latter—who was a frequent and much interested auditor—in a letter to the *New York Tribune*, of September 1st, 1847, gives his testimony to this work, which we subjoin the more readily, as it will be seen that he dissents from some of its conclusions. Professor Bush says:—

From a careful study of the whole matter, from its inception to its completion, I am perfectly satisfied that the work is the production of an ignorant young man, utterly and absolutely incompetent, in his natural state, to the utterances it embodies. I have not a shadow of doubt that it was given forth by him in a peculiar abnormal state, *for some portions of it I heard with my own ears, and can testify that what I now read printed, accurately corresponds to what I have heard*

* The difference (between this and clairvoyance) is the same as between sight *without understanding* and sight crowned with the latter unspeakable advantage and improvement. For example: you *look* at a piece of gold ore or at a pound of gypsum. This sight, without a full understanding of the chemical constituents of what you see, corresponds to clairvoyance. But suppose you both *look at* and *chemically analyze* the ore or gypsum, then you illustrate both clairvoyance and clair-science, or, in other words, interior perception in combination with intellectual understanding, which is the superior condition. Hence it follows that one who is a clairvoyant merely is more or less liable to err and mistake the locality, properties, nature, and relation, of whatever he may thus perceive; while, on the other hand, he who is both clear-seeing and clear-knowing—or who possesses at once the double blessing of *clairvoyance* and *clairscience*—is liable to err only in three directions, *viz.* in quantities, times, and magnitudes. Both conditions, therefore, are capable of being eternally improved.—*The Magic Staff*.

spoken. That all the rest was delivered in the same manner, scores of eye and ear-witnesses are ready to attest. How the subject-matter came into his mind is another question, which I do not now consider; but that the present volume, in its entire contents, was actually dictated from the lips of A. J. Davis, is a point of which I have no more doubt than that it is now for sale in Mr. Redfield's book-store. The original drafts subscribed by the witnesses in attendance at each sitting are at all times accessible, and everyone who wishes may certify himself of the fidelity of the printed volume to the manuscript copy. . . . There is no imposture in the fact of the book's existence, for here it is before us, and it has been produced by *somebody*. There is no imposture either in the fact that the book was dictated by the lips of A. J. Davis, for the manuscripts show the signatures of 267 witnesses,* who heard one or more of them delivered, to which the very respectable name of Professor Lewis of this city may be added, a gentleman whose veracity will not be questioned. He has expressly asserted it in the *New York Observer*. . . . We have clearly traced the book to Davis as the ostensible source. But what was his real agency in the matter? Was he the prime mover, or merely the obsequious tool? Was his asserted mesmeric state a veritable reality, or a concerted sham? One or the other of these suppositions must be assumed. If the state was real, the book is undoubtedly genuine, whatever may be the particular theory in regard to the manner in which the ideas came into his mind. If it was not real, but mere pretence, then he must have been previously *crammed* with the matter, and recited it off as a schoolboy does his *piece*. But see what difficulties crowd upon this supposition! In the first place, the lectures were, on an average, from one to three hours long, and continued from day to day, with slight interruptions, for a year and two months. •Here is, in the outset, a prodigy of memory which taxes credulity to the utmost. But where and when were the lessons learnt? His time during the day was incessantly occupied with medical examinations, receiving visits, taking exercise, &c. The night alone remained for it. How much could he have slept? And in what way was the *cramming* process carried on? Were the lectures read to him from books or manuscripts, or were they dictated *vivâ voce*? They were not read from books, for they are not to be found in books. And as to their being read from manuscripts, is it credible that the man capable of this work would resort to such a paltry expedient, and be found wearing out the long hours of the night in these protracted readings, instead of giving it directly to the world in his own name or anonymously? But even if this stretch of literary knavery be supposed possible, as perhaps it may, yet the hypothesis is knocked on the head at once by the fact, that the witnesses will all testify that in hundreds of instances, in the delivery of the lectures, he launched out, in reply to questions proposed on the spot, into extended digressions, incidental to the main scope, showing a complete mastery of the subject in its various ramifications and relations, and which could not possibly have been included in his prescribed rôle, supposing him to have been furnished with one. This was remarkably the case when I was myself present, and propounded a question, through his magnetizer, relative to the import of the Hebrew word for "firmament," which he answered with the utmost correctness. These digressions, which were oftentimes singularly interesting and instructive, do not appear in the volume. . . . Taken as a whole, the work is a profound and elaborate discussion of the *Philosophy of the Universe*; and, for grandeur of conception, soundness of principle, clearness of illustration, order of arrangement, and encyclopædical range of subjects, I know of no work, of any single mind, that will bear away from it the palm. To every theme, the inditing mind approaches with a sort of latent consciousness of mastery of all its principles, details, and technicalities, and yet without the least ostentatious display of superior mental powers. In

* The names and addresses of twenty-three of these witnesses are published in the introduction to *Nature's Divine Revelations*. It is interesting to note that one of these is T. L. HARRIS, of New York. This gentleman was at the time so captivated with these lectures that he withdrew from the situation he then held as a Universalist Clergyman, and, instead, elected himself a missionary of "Nature's Divine Revelations"—their first and perhaps most zealous apostle.

every one the speaker appears to be equally at home, and utters himself with the easy confidence of one who had made each subject the exclusive study of a whole life. The manner in the scientific department is always calm, dignified, and conciliatory, as if far more disposed to excuse than to censure the errors which it aims to correct, while the style is easy, flowing, chaste, appropriate, with a certain indescribable simplicity that operates like a charm upon the reader.

The grand doctrine insisted on throughout, is that of *Spiritual Causation*, or in other words, that all natural forms and organisms are effects, mirrors, and expressions of internal spiritual principles that are their causes, just as the human soul is the proximate cause of the human body. These spiritual essences are from God, the Infinite Spirit; and they work by inherent forces which are laws. As a necessary result, there are no immediate creations by a divine *fiat*, but a constant evolving chain of developments, in an ascending series from the lowest types of organization to the highest. This theory is reasoned out with consummate ability, and its application to the geological history of our globe, and its varied productions, forms one of the most finished specimens of philosophical argument which is to be met with in the English language. Yet the scope of the work is as far as possible from being purely speculative. It constantly aims at a practical result—the reunion of the race in a grand fraternity of interest and affection; and the sole reason of introducing the biblical and theological discussion, is to show the operation of the religious element, in producing the disunity and antagonism that now exist in the world, and which must, in some way, be abolished before universal harmony can be compassed. In this, though the end is good, and the treatment of the subject masterly, yet I am as well satisfied as anyone that the reasoning is fallacious, and that the *truth* would have been more accordant with his general scheme.

As to whether the ideas expressed may have been received by sympathetic influx from his magnetizer or others associated with him, it may be enough to quote what is said on this point by "The Scribe:"—

Suffice it to say, that, for the best of reasons, *we know* that such a thing could not be. Many facts, principles, and theories, are presented in this volume which were before totally unconceived and unbelieved by either of Mr. Davis's associates, especially on cosmological, theological, and spiritual subjects. One of Mr. Davis's associates, at least has been truly pronounced as in a merely "rudimentary state;" and the other we presume would have as little difficulty in proving that his mind has not been overburdened with knowledge upon the subjects herein discussed. Should it be necessary, the evidence touching this point will be presented hereafter, though this may not be the most gratifying to the personal vanity of him upon whom may devolve the task of setting it forth to the world.

If this law of sympathetic influx, however, is *admitted*, it should be duly *explained* and *defined* before the conclusion is formed that it may not, under favourable circumstances, be a medium through which *spirits* of the higher world may transmit their knowledge to mankind on earth. Certainly the sympathetic transmission of a thought from one person to another, while both are in the body, is quite as inexplicable as would be the transmission of the thoughts of a disembodied spirit to a person rendered duly susceptible to sympathetic influx.

Furthermore, the work was originally proposed by the clairvoyant himself; the time of its commencement was fixed upon by himself; and all the instrumentalities connected with its production have constantly been under his authoritative direction. He has spoken only as directed by his interior promptings, and no portions of his work have been elicited by the interrogatories or suggestions of another. When he has spoken he has spoken spontaneously; and at such times as his interior perceptions were not duly expanded, he has refused to proceed with his dictations. All persons around him connected in any way with the production of the book, were, therefore, moved by *him*; he was not in the least degree moved or influenced by any of *them*; and it is owing solely to influences

from the interior world as operating on his mind, that the book now makes its appearance.*

And after passing in review Davis's life, opportunities, acquirements, &c., he concludes, "that this book must have been dictated by some other and higher source of information than that accessible to the physical senses. That source of information we claim to be the SPIRITUAL WORLD." These "revelations," however, claim no authority but that arising from the conformity with nature and reason which they may be found to exhibit.

It is but justice to Mr. Davis, to record that when the work was ready for the press, "he voluntarily, in the presence of a witness, and contrary to the expectation of every one, renounced all claim, direct and indirect, to any portion of the copyright, and the proceeds of the sales of the work;" and this too, though he had not accumulated a dollar by his clairvoyant labours.

As our object in this sketch has been to trace the spiritual development of the subject of it, and the circumstances of his life only so far as appeared requisite to a proper understanding of the same, it is perhaps, for this purpose, unnecessary to pursue his biography farther. With his subsequent personal history and relations, we do not feel that either we or our readers have any special concern, further than to know that under the "interior illumination" of the "superior condition," he has delivered many public lectures, and written many books, some of which are said to have had a circulation of more than ten thousand copies. In *Nature's Divine Revelations*, *The Great Harmonia* (5 vols.) *The Philosophy of Special Providence*, *The Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse*, *The Penetralia*, *The Present Age and Inner Life*, and *The Magic Staff*, the reader will find all the information he may need as to his philosophy and his personal history and experiences.

We have only to say in conclusion, and to prevent misapprehension, that while there is much in these works which we

* The scientific reader may be interested in learning that the existence of the planet, now known as Neptune, was affirmed by Davis in these lectures, several months before Le Verrier's discovery was known in America, and six months before the planet announced by him was actually observed. Professor Bush says:—"I am willing to testify under oath that I was made acquainted with this annunciation several months before the *slightest intimation* was given in this country of Le Verrier's discovery, and I can appeal to respectable gentlemen to whom I mentioned the fact at the time, and who immediately reminded me of the circumstance when intelligence of the discovery reached our shores." This testimony from a man whose moral character is, I believe, quite unimpeachable, renders it difficult to refuse belief in the veracity of the history of the above statement, which it is said can be proved by numerous witnesses to have been in manuscript in March, 1846. We may add that another of his statements. *i. e.*, that of the existence of a central sun around which our own revolves, is said to be verified by the subsequent discoveries of Maedler and M. Struve, the Russian imperial astronomer.

regard as unquestionably excellent, and while we admire the calm and kindly spirit which pervades them, there is yet in them much with which we have little sympathy—much from which we entirely dissent. Our object, however, is not to discuss these differences, or to attempt a critical examination and estimate of the value of these works, but to direct attention to the circumstances of their production, and to the experiences of their author, as psychological phenomena. The circumstances of Davis's early life and position, as we have related them, are fully detailed in the sources from which we have quoted, and confirmed by the published testimonies of his neighbours, employers and others, conversant with the facts. If on a careful survey of all the evidence the facts are found to be as stated (and they have never been disproved), and they can be rationally accounted for without the acknowledgment of spiritual agency, we hope that whoever may be in possession of this secret will not long withhold it from the world. The explanation will also, when given, doubtless, apply to other cases of a like nature within our knowledge.

T. S.

MAURICE ON THE INVISIBLE CLOUD OF WITNESSES.

THERE is nothing we are so familiar with in the books of rhetoricians as invocations of departed worthies to look down upon their descendants, either that they may reprove them for some baseness, or encourage them to strength and victory. Considering how such language has been abused by those who have attached no meaning or scarcely any meaning to it, who have regarded it as little more than a figure of speech, it is wonderful how much power there still remains in it—how it stirs the blood of us who hear, even when we have not much faith in the sincerity of the speaker. He is often startled, like other enchanters, by the spirit he has raised; perhaps commends himself for the skill which could make a somewhat stale imposture successful. He does himself injustice. He has been truer than he gives himself the credit for being; the heart of man responds not to his artifice, which is paltry, but to the truth hidden within the artifice, which is mighty. Men's consciences tell them that it is so; that they are habitually unmindful of the presence of unseen spectators; that when that thought of it is awakened in them they are not in a more false and unreasonable state of mind, but in a truer state, than their ordinary one. How it can be so they may not ask themselves; their instincts are better than their logic; they know that they are for the moment better and more serious men for the impression that has been made upon them, and they cannot refer a moral benefit to the belief in a lie.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews has been recalling to his Hebrew brethren the acts of those ancestors with whose names they were most familiar. All those acts he had traced to their faith in an Invisible Lord, and to the substantial hope of which that faith was the ground. They subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, out of weakness were made strong, only because He whom they could not see was more real and living to them than any of the things which they did see. Then he speaks of those whom he had contemplated apart, as a body. They are a cloud of witnesses; they are watching the Israelites of that day, who are engaged in a race as serious, as full of hindrances, as full of hope, as their own. Each runner, when hardest pressed, when most out of heart, might be sure that he had three

spectators, and that their sympathies, and all the mysterious aid which comes from sympathy, were with him at every moment.

It is possible for a person trained in those rhetorical practices to which I have referred, and knowing that religious men of all schools and churches have resorted to them unscrupulously,—it is possible for him to think that these words are an instance of them, and a warrant for them. It might not remove that opinion to point out the exceedingly practical character of the previous chapter, the impatience which the writer must have felt for fine speeches, when the heroes whom he revered were all doers of work; when it was to work, and the trust that is the soul of that work, that he was awakening the flagging spirits of the Christians in Palestine. With our artificial notions, we should dispose of all such arguments. We should say that, this being his object, he of course thought himself obliged to use all such passionate appeals as experience shows to be effectual, at least for awhile, in stimulating torpid natures. The true answer is, that the argument of the epistle, where it is most strictly argumentative, had all been directed to the purpose of proving that Christ has rent asunder the veil which separates those who have left the world from those who are in it; and that it was a formal, logical, inevitable conclusion from these premises, that this cloud of witnesses were actually with them, not brought to them by some violent effort of the fancy. He who believed those premises, had no doubt a duty to perform after he had stated the grounds on which he believed them. Every power which God had given him was demanded, that he might break the fetters with which sense, and fancy the creature of sense, were binding the minds of his readers, and hindering them from looking straightly and steadily at the facts of their position. He had a right to any forms of speech, to any illustrations which nature or human life could supply him with; not that he might conjure them into some unnatural excitement, but that he might clear away the enervating delusions to which they were, from indolence and despondency, surrendering themselves.

The writer of this epistle, then, is not sanctioning and imitating the insincerity of those orators who make it part of their trade to talk of heroes and saints looking down from their shining seats; but he is explaining why honest men, in their best and truest moments, when they most needed to be braced for action, when death was looking them in the face, have felt the need, and confessed the power, of the conviction that they were not alone or unheeded, that the hosts on their side were greater than the hosts against them. It is horrible to think that they did what they ought to do, because they believed what they had no right to believe. It would be a comfort surely quite infinite, to know that they had a right to believe it then; that we have a right to believe the same always; that the dispositions in us, which withstand the belief, are the false ones.—*Sermons on the Eucharist.*

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—At a circle I have had the privilege to attend, it had been requested of the spirits, for the full satisfaction of honest enquiry on the part of some of us, that they would favour us with proof of their presence and action beyond that of trance addresses and movements of the table. The spirits appointed an evening for a darkened circle. At this I was present. The mediums were a niece of the gentleman of the house, and Madame Besson. I have thought the following record of my experience there may deserve note in your pages.

The circle was formed after the reading of a chapter of the New Testament and a prayer. There were present 17 or 18 persons—several not believers. The mediums sat at a circular table in the centre, the others joining hands round. I had on my right Mr. B., a Spiritualist, on my left an inquirer (my brother). Upon the darkening of the room, gentle raps were heard in various places, followed by a loud clap in the air. The raps then increased in intensity, accompanied at times by claps and a noise as of fingers snapping. After a few seconds Mr. B. said he was touched. I requested to be touched also, and

instantly felt a gentle pressure on the knee; which, however, I disregarded, determining to set it down to imagination. Again the touch—again the determination. Then I was seized below the right knee with considerable force, enabling me to feel every finger of a strong hand. A few seconds later a hand was passed down over Mr. B.'s and mine (clasped); it being as large as that of a man. I then, believing that it was a spirit,—for others in the room simultaneously confessed to feeling hands and touches which they recognized,—asked the spirit to touch me on the head, when a hand passed lightly and rapidly over my head, brushing my hair in its course. A few minutes later, a loud, prolonged whistle sounded through the room—the raps, clappings, and snappings had been almost continuous. Mr. B. recognized, he said, the touch of his wife, and he requested her to touch him on the forehead. I was at this moment leaning in front of that gentleman, watching a star-like light, and which light was visible to others, at the opposite side of the room. Not changing my position I was surprised by what felt like a muslin sleeve brushing my forehead, and, simultaneously, some fine drapery seemed to come against my right hand. I concluded that the spirit was leaning over to touch my neighbour as desired, which he corroborated. A hand was then passed over my brother's and mine. I asked the spirit again to touch my head, when a hand was laid over it, remaining there for several seconds. I then passed over my forehead, quite displacing my spectacles. The glasses were then deliberately, accurately, and gently lifted from their new position and restored to their proper place. The hand then passed to my chin, seemed to try to grasp my short beard, and, being unsuccessful, passed to my head, seized a lock of my hair, and playfully pulled me forward—compelling me to beg aloud for a cessation of that peculiar manifestation. My hair was, I may add, in disorder when the room was re-lit. All being in some degree of excitement and making comments, the host proposed that a short hymn should be sung. While this was done the air resounded with detonations, as if keeping time with clapping of hands, snapping of fingers, and rappings of knuckles on the table. Before the light was restored the doxology was sung. This was rhythmically accompanied as before with the addition of ringing metallic sounds.

I have here confined myself, as much as possible, to a description of my own experiences. All present expressed themselves confident that what they had witnessed was directly from spirits.—I am, sir, yours very truly,

ALFRED R. GASSION.

[We have seen two other persons who were at the *séance*: their accounts concur with Mr. G.'s.—ED.]

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

Preston, July 6.

SIR,—The following experience, met with by a gentleman whilst being educated at S—— College, for the Catholic Priesthood, may, perhaps, possess some interest with your readers. The gentleman, who is well known to me, eventually doffed his vestments, and is now part proprietor of one of our first provincial newspapers. Whilst studying for the Catholic Priesthood then at this College, he awoke at the earliest break of one morning, when he felt a strange sensation, which forbade his leaving his bed as usual for study. He felt as if closely bound to the couch. In vain he tried to rise. Presently there was the rustling of a vestment along the stone corridor. Thinking it was one of the brethren, he took no notice at first of the noise. The rustling came nearer, and at last it touched his own door, which was slowly opened, and into the chamber glided a mystical figure in a monk's garb. What was seen of the face was like a woman's. An uneasiness and a hot glow came over him. Some two paces within the door the figure stopped, and fixed wide loving eyes on him, full of mellow sadness. From its dark folded robe it drew a mourning letter, and holding it to my friend, left, and again the robe rustled along the full length of the corridor. As its last whisper died away, the glow in his blood subsided, and the power which seemed to press him to the mattress left him. However, a sad uneasiness fluttered within his heart, and some glamorous intelligence seemed to be with him. He dressed and went downstairs amongst his

brethren. It was with great difficulty he spoke to them, and after some short space, they were surprised to see him suddenly dart from their midst with quickest speed. Two of them followed him, thinking that his singular conduct was caused by some sudden mental malady. A boy was coming along one of the passages with the morning letters, and with wonder they saw him pounce amongst his bundle, and plucking forth a black-edged letter, he broke the seal and was calm again. It transpired that the letter contained an account of the death of a dear sister, who was then residing some twenty miles from the college. No intimation of her illness had previously been sent to him. Her death had been most sudden, from an affection of the heart. In narrating this experience in after time, my friend stated that the letter exactly corresponded in appearance with the one held up to him by the gentle monk. Directly he possessed its tidings, the mystic power which seemed to have been wrapped about him disappeared; it having begun to expire at the very touching of the letter. Of his darting to it, he could give no other account than that a sudden force had stepped within him, and he was driven from amongst his brethren, knowing not whither he went. The announcement in the letter proved correct, and he found that shortly prior to her death his sister had expressed a strong wish to be with her brother..

I am, sir, your obedient servant,
MOREVILLE BARMBY.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

15, Basinghall Street, E.C.,
12th, June, 1861.

SIR,—This evening I was present at a sitting for spirit manifestations, at the residence of Mrs. P——, Regent's-park. The party consisted of seven, including Mr. and Mrs. Home. The table we sat at was round, and about five feet in diameter. The room was a large back drawing room; in one corner there was a kind of flower-stand pedestal, and on it were a number of bronze gods and goddesses, sacred bulls, &c.; the idols brought by Mrs. P. from India.

I took rough notes in pencil as the phenomena took place; and as nearly as I can remember, I give the exact words used; but, doubtless, as perception and memory are not so active in receiving and retaining words as scenes, there may be some slight inaccuracy in reporting the form of words used by our spirit friends. Subject to that possibility, I am ready to make an affirmation, or if need be, take an oath before any legal authority in confirmation of the accuracy of the statement I am about to make.

On sitting down at the loo table, all present placed their hands on it, and in two or three minutes, the heavy table trembled or quivered in every fibre, as as if it had an ague fit, and then it rose from off the ground several inches. On descending, the table cloth was raised as if by a substance underneath. One of the party took an accordion by the white rim with one hand—the keys turned to and almost touching the ground, his other hand resting on the table—the bellows and keys then began to act, and an air was played, no one visible touching the keys. At this time a small hand was seen by the sitters under the lace fall of Mrs. S. W. raising the lace. The accordion was then handed to Mrs. S. W., who had never been at a sitting before, and in her hand it was played—the instrument being held in the same manner as by the previous sitter. By sounds or "raps" was spelled out the words "Mary Cos. II." the name of a loved sister of Mrs. S. W., long deceased; at the same time Mrs. W. felt her dress pulled. "Charles" was next spelt in like manner, but she knew of no Charles. "Yes, Charles!" but still no recognition. Mr. Home then suddenly went into the trance and saw "Charles," and gave such a description of his appearance and manner, that Mrs. W. recognised her late grandson, whose name at birth she had wished to be called Charles, but the wish had been over-ruled, and another name was given. Shortly, a sprig from a verbena plant in the room was broken off by invisible agency, and placed on the table by her right hand, and the sounds spelt out "Grandma, this is from little Charles." The lady was much affected, even to tears. While in trance, Mr. Home rose from his seat, went round to his invalid wife, and (with closed eyes) put his arms round her neck, and in tones of tenderness spoke to her in Russian, and pointed upwards. On Mr.

Home coming out of the trance the more physical manifestations were resumed, and we heard behind us sounds, as if pieces of bell metal were struck against each other repeatedly. We found that one of the bronze gods and a sacred bull, with stem and chafing-dish, had been taken from the pedestal of bronze images, and that the stem and chafing-dish had been *unscrewed*, and were being tossed about the room. On Mrs. P. saying "They like to knock those gods about," the sounds spelt out "We shall soon see them put under foot;" the table at one end was then raised, and one of the gods put under one of the claws. A branch was now plucked from a verbena plant, and dropped on to the table in front of Mr. H., and while we were talking about the incident, another large branch from the same plant was broken off, and conveyed over the table by the invisible power, and dropped in front of me; and immediately after, the verbena plant was plucked up by the roots out of the flower-pot, and thrown on the table before our eyes. As Mrs. H. was known to be dying, it at once struck me that this was intended to represent that death was simply the removal of the soul—the divine flower in man, from the body—its earthen vessel. On mentioning this, the table was moved so as to represent the idea of the pleasure felt by our unseen friends at this recognition of the meaning of their symbolic teaching.

Mr. H. was then touched, and on placing his hand behind him there was placed in it the earth compact as it had been taken out of the flower-pot. He placed it on the table, beside the verbena. One of the company then took up the flower to again look at it, and while we were looking at it, the sounds spelt out "A little of the earth still clings to the roots." We then heard the sound of the breaking of the verbena flower-pot, and Mrs. H. had her dress violently shaken. On moving the table back, we saw the fragments of the broken flower-pot near Mrs. Home's dress. A question was put by one of the sitters, "Will you show us the difference between earth-life and spirit-life?" At once the accordion gave out sounds of great discord, followed by tones of exquisite sweetness. I then took the accordion in *my* hand, and held it upside down with one hand by the white rim; and at my wish, sweet music was played, but the force used was so great, that I had to rest the edge of the instrument against the edge of the table, as my hand was too weak to hold it. The instrument was then taken from me, and played upon artistically while on the ground—no seen agent touching it.

Feeling that my knees were gently pressed, I put my hand down, and my fingers were several times gently pressed by an unseen hand; on placing my handkerchief over my hand, I felt a gentle pulling of the handkerchief several times, and on looking I found that a knot was tied on the part of the handkerchief which projected a few inches over my hand, and which I am certain was not there before. Immediately after, Mrs. W., who was sitting next to me, with her hands on the table, had a hand again placed under her lace fall. I saw it plainly rise, and lift up the fall. It was like the hand of a young female, delicately formed, and the fingers were long and taper—the hand was within about twelve inches of me. The sitting was closed by the sounds spelling out, "God bless you—good night." All the sitters then went into the front drawing-room except Mrs. P. and myself, who remained to pick up the bronze images. We found the bronze god—the bull and the chafing dish, but not the stem. After a diligent and unsuccessful search, we were passing into the room where the other friends were, when Mr. Home came and asked what was the cause of our delay. I told him, and said—"Now, if our spirit-friends would lay hold of your hand, as I have seen done some three or four years ago, and take it to the lost stem, it would be a striking evidence of intelligent agency." At once his hand was projected out, and drawn to the flower pedestal, where the idol originally stood, it then went through the pantomime of going to where it had been—and then darted off to a corner of the room by the fire-place; darted down perpendicularly like a hawk, and dropped on the *stem* we had been in search of. The incident, though slight, was so sudden and unexpected, as to confirm me in the belief that our spirit friends are more keen-eyed than we, that they hear our words, and can control even our physical organism. Essayists and Reviewers, how *unreasonable* are your reasons against the spiritual phenomena mentioned in Scripture: when spiritual phenomena are taking place—not in the islands of the Moon—but in the city of London, in a private dwelling-house facing Regent's Park, in this very year of our Lord, 1861.

JOHN JONES.

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Welcome back dear Charley welcome
to the temple of peace & happiness

It is in this way I love to comment
write my happy thoughts. In this
way I can - talk without the fear
of other minds - In this way I
can ask you purely what you
is so sweet. What more can I ask
dearly Charley in our blessed life
it every hour but more when in the
close communion and particularly to
might I feel overjoyed to find that
I can as in former days, write to
my dear Charley with pen and ink

The chain is not broken only
remains passive and undisturbed

Remember the success of these meetings
depends much upon you. Memory has
is filled with bright flowers to night and
joys of the past. The troubles of life
have vanished from you now dear lady
and a higher future is marked out.

I am glad to see dear Father
back. Write me some private.

Questions.

Good night. Good night

Estelle

"The one written on in ink will no doubt be looked upon with
interest. It was done with an ordinary steel pen which with a
glass inkstand and the card had been placed upon the table
in front of us. In the process of writing, the pen was frequently
heard to strike against the mouth of the inkstand in obtaining
its supplies."

Vide M. L.'s letter.